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Has the War Begun?

For two reasons, the time is at hand for Hitler to wage his threatened war against Britain and France. One is that his peace offensive has failed, and he promised that its rejection would be followed by an opening of real hostilities. The other is that if he is to make a big drive on the western front, he will have to do so before late autumn and winter rains make it too difficult. Our readers may know more about what eventuates than we can at the time of writing. Already there has been the largely unsuccessful air raid on the Firth of Forth, and a minor offensive against the French lines near Luxemburg. The French report great activity behind the Westwall. Whatever happens, it is most unlikely that terrorism or *Blitzkrieg* would be ultimately successful in the west. A rash Hitler offensive, in which he would risk too much, is just what Allied strategy is waiting for. Soberer heads in the German command are reported to be advising against it. But has Hitler the nerve and the resources to outwait his besiegers? Or has he some surprise yet to uncover?

Look Out for Booby-Traps!

Maybe the Soviet Union is planning to gobble Finland just as it helped Germany to gobble Poland. But again, maybe it isn't. In that case, there has been a lot of sensational and rather dangerous alarm in the news of the negotiations. After all, the Soviet agreements with the smaller Baltic states have been surprisingly mild so far. Though these states have, for good or evil, definitely passed within the Soviet sphere of influence, they have not yet lost any of their internal autonomy, but have had to give up only a few sites for naval and air bases, and have been compensated by a more active commerce. Lithuania has even received back territory that Poland snatched from her when in 1920 that imperialistic dictatorship took her ancient capital, Vilna. And Finland is a much stronger and sounder nation than Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania.

It is true that Finland has lived in terror of Russian aggression, which many times in past centuries has overrun her. She was taking only elementary precautions in preparing for the worst; her mobilization, plus the diplomatic help she obtained from the Scandinavian nations and the United States, would in any case put her in a better bargaining position. But it was perilous for us to shout about another imperialist conquest, since there were influences hostile to the democratic cause that wanted just such an outcome. The Nazis would be delighted to embroil the Soviet Union with Scandinavia and the Allies, while their British counterparts in Tory ranks would like to turn the war into a holy crusade against communism. The tactics of both would naturally be to push both Russia and Finland so far that it would be impossible for either to withdraw. The occasion is one for stepping softly.

—And That War-Debt Gratitude

We hasten to add, with all the emphasis we can muster, that our admiration for Finland is not that particularly sordid type of sentimentality derived from

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the fact that she alone has paid her war obligations to the United States. We like Finland because her people are intelligent, because she has a democratic government with large admixtures of socialism, because she has done extraordinarily well with extremely meager resources—and because we like Finland. But it makes us sick to see people break down and cry because Finland was "honest" enough to pay the instalments on her debt. (It wasn't strictly a war debt anyway, but was incurred to set her on her feet after she broke away from the Soviet Union.) The fact is that we wouldn't let any other nation in Europe pay up because we wouldn't accept from them the excess of import goods necessary for payment. In the case of Finland we happened to want enough wood pulp and timber so that the small payment could be arranged. Anyone who seriously thinks that only this little part of the wide world was kind enough not to play old softy Uncle Sam for a sucker ought to be too proud to shoot off skyrockets about it.

Squeeze Play on Turkey

Some day an intricate diplomatic story will be told about the negotiations between Turkey and the Soviet Union. Turkey, with her strong army and her control of the Dardanelles, would be a key link in the projected Allied ring about the Reich. The original plan was that Turkey would remain neutral unless Italy entered the war or Germany attacked in the Balkans. Then she would come to the aid of Greece or Rumania according to need. She would also hold the Dardanelles open for aid from Britain and France. Such an arrangement would tend to prevent Germany from obtaining much economic aid in southeastern Europe. Now the German-Russian pact has changed the picture.

Nobody seems to know just what Stalin is trying to get Turkey to do. Is his aim to close the Dardanelles to British and French warships? Is it to neutralize Turkey in case either Germany or Russia or both carry out aggression in the Balkans? Or is it more ambitious still, and aimed at obtaining a foothold, with precious resources of oil, in Iran or even in Iraq? Whatever his intention, Turkey seems to be moving slowly and with extreme care. She cannot afford to break the historic friendship with the Soviet Union, but on the other hand, her interests in the Mediterranean and the Balkans coincide more with those of Britain and France. The outcome is immensely important for the whole future of the war. Opponents of Nazism can hope only that if Turkey is forced to modify her plans, it will not be in favor of the Reich.

Japan in China

For two months or more, things have been going badly for the Japanese in China. It is now being revealed that their truce with Russia was the sequel to a disastrous defeat that they suffered along the Mongolian border. They have admitted to losing 18,000 men—almost half as many as the Germans lost in the whole Polish campaign. They have also admitted that their mechanical equipment was inferior to that of the Russians they were fighting. The truce did not involve a non-aggression pact. On the contrary, it is reported that the Russians are still sending supplies to the Chinese government. The recent Chinese raid on Hankow must have been carried out with Russian planes; the British aren't exporting any. And although the truce made it possible for the Japanese to withdraw troops from the Russian border, they didn't withdraw enough of them to capture Changsha—from which they have just withdrawn after what seems to have been the greatest Chinese victory of the war. Meanwhile the strike of the Foreign Office staff in Tokyo, against army rule, was the first serious sign of conflict on the home front.

The Japanese, however, can console themselves with some recent diplomatic developments. The puppet Nanking government, soon to be established under Wang Ching-wei, is going to be stronger than most people believed. It is rumored that the French have advised China to make peace and warned her that she can expect no more aid from the Allies. The British and the Japanese are said to be conducting undercover negotiations. There are people in London who would sacrifice more than China for a military alliance with Japan.

Submarine Mysteries

When war broke out, it was generally assumed that methods developed toward the end of the previous conflict and perfected since then would enable Britain and France to limit the submarine menace without much trouble. As far as merchant shipping is concerned, this seems so far to be true; with the introduction of convoys the losses of British and French merchantmen have been reduced to a negligible point from the figures of the first week or two. Nobody expected, however, the successes achieved by submarines against the British navy itself. The sinking of the aircraft carrier "Courageous" might have been a fluke or the result of carelessness, but when it was followed after not many days by the "Royal Oak," one of Britain's most formidable battleships, the matter began to look serious. Britain cannot afford to lose one capital ship, to say nothing of one or two a month. How could a submarine get within range of a first-class sea fighter lying at her base without being discovered? Are the screens of destroyers and the detection devices less efficient than had been supposed? And how could a torpedo cause so much damage to a heavily armored ship, especially designed with bulges and bulkheads to counteract the danger, that it sank within a few minutes? Does Germany have some new type of explosive? Until these questions are answered, it would be well

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for our naval authorities to go slow in their recently announced plans to speed up the construction of a super-navy of great ships.

Unlucky Lindy

What has been lucky in the career of Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh? It would be close to an insult to say that his flight to Paris, a fine achievement of preparation and skill, owed more to luck than the comparable flights made since then. And was it really luck for him that his flight so caught the public mind that he became wealthy and famous in a few years? His fame isolated him from the average mechanics and pilots with whom he had, and still has, very much in common. His wealth made him a target for unscrupulous newspapers and criminals.

Recently he has had the misfortune to be enticed into politics, a field in which he is apparently—and quite naturally—as naïve as a schoolboy. First he made the Russians furious by letting it be known that he thought their air force pitifully inadequate, though he had made only a short visit to the country. He accepted an important decoration from the Nazis—and if the story is true that he was caught unaware when they pinned it to his lapel, that is only one more misfortune. The Cliveden set made much of him, and it was said that his stories of the enormous strength of Germany in the air had a share in producing the British backdown at Munich. Now he has made two radio speeches to America, in favor of peace. Though the vast majority of Americans agree with his desire to keep out of the war, his distinction between offensive and defensive weapons, like Mr. Hoover's, seems like pure sophistry. And he slipped badly in the remark that the United States should not allow Canada to declare war without consulting her. The unlucky hero probably couldn't have thought of a better way to infuriate the Canadians.

Shipping Wants Exemption

The plea of our heavily subsidized merchant marine that the "carry" part of the new neutrality law be omitted so that it can continue to sail through European war zones may be contemptuously dismissed. There would be little or no American merchane marine in European trade if the government did not put up the money to keep it running; this is done under the guise of national policy. But it is also, or ought to be, a still more important national policy not to risk getting into war by having American ships sunk and American lives lost. In this case those who pay the piper certainly ought to call the tune.

There is a case, however, for allowing American merchant ships to call at belligerent ports where there is no danger that they will be sunk. As far as anyone can tell, many such ports exist in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere in the Southern Pacific and Indian Oceans. The original design of the neutrality law was to give the President discretion to declare war zones through which our ships could not travel. Congress, however, was jealous of delegating this discretion to a President whose sympathies had been so frankly declared. The language of the present bill was therefore substituted. There is still no reason why Congress could not exempt belligerent ports outside the European zone. If Congress fears that such waters may at any time become dangerous, it can authorize the President to extend war zones as the occasion requires—reserving to itself the right to do so if he does not. If it does not trust him, it can remain in session as long as it likes.

Who Saved the "Iroquois"?

The safe arrival of the "Iroquois," bearing American refugees, does not solve the mystery of the warning from Admiral Raeder of the Reich that she would be sunk before reaching our shores. The plain intention of the warning was to exculpate the German navy for the sinking of the "Athenia," now under investigation by our government, since the implication was that the predicted attack would be carried out by a British submarine in an effort to make us think the Germans had done it and so bring us into the war on the Allied side. That was the German explanation of what had happened to the "Athenia." We are at liberty to believe either that the Admiral was telling the truth or that his action was a Nazi propaganda trick. If true, the warning sufficed to prevent the attempt. If false, it was without risk of discovery, since the absence of an attempt could be attributed by us to the revelation of the plot. Knowing the lengths to which Nazi propaganda will go, we are inclined to accept the latter explanation.

Mr. Dies Says Shibboleth

Representative Martin Dies looked with a jaundiced eye on the Conference on Civil Liberties held in New York the other day. Did it, he inquired loudly in the presence of reporters, adopt a resolution flaying communism? If it didn't his worst fears were confirmed. It is a pretty silly notion that every meeting of every society has to flay communism to get an approving gleam from Mr. Dies. The New York conference, for example, adopted no resolutions whatever on any subject. It was not intended to lay the customary lot of eggs, but to afford a genuine meeting of minds. If communism became illegal in this country we think it quite likely that the Communists, organizing as a branch of the Bombay Chowder and Bicycle Club, might begin every meeting with a good resolution against the Reds, just for the benefit of the police. Meanwhile, it is ridiculous to make such resolutions a shibboleth. Mr. Dies is a member of the Christian Disciples Church in Orange, Texas. Did this church last Sunday adopt a

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resolution flaying the Reds? If not, hadn't Mr. Dies better look into it?

Billings Too

Amid the encircling gloom, it is grand good news that Governor Olson of California has managed to set Warren K. Billings free. Billings was framed like Tom Mooney, but after a former conviction. Under California law, the Governor could free him only with the consent of a majority of the State Supreme Court. For the greater part of twenty-three years, the Court had stubbornly refused, and apparently Governor Olson had to appoint two new members to get his way. Billings will go free; but in accordance with nice American custom, he will get no compensation of any sort for twenty-three years of his life spent behind bars.

We should like to believe that California has repented of the perjury and abuse of the legal process committed by agencies of the law in 1916; but we see no evidence that this is true. Governor Olson was elected largely through the support of the old-age pension vote, and the cases of Mooney and Billings were not an important issue. So far as the evidence shows, California majority opinion has never concerned itself with the worldwide stigma on its honor. Who cares whether a couple of men were railroaded to jail for life? Weren't they radicals?

Relief for the Joads

One of the things many people have been angry about for a long time is that migratory workers—who by the nature of their work cannot be permanent residents of a locality—are therefore frequently denied relief, and other forms of public assistance. A recent report of research workers to Colonel F. C. Harrington, the national Works Projects Administrator, argues strongly against this condition. It points out that the very fact of his migration is an indication of the migrant workman's willingness to undergo hardships for the sake of a job, and that he is an essential factor in Western and Southwestern agriculture, as it at present operates. Moreover, he has often been attracted from his former home by advertising and promises of the employers (as John Steinbeck said in "The Grapes of Wrath," and some critics of the book refused to believe).

For example, the report cites the cotton-growing area of Arizona, where there has never been enough local labor during the picking season. As far back as 1912 the employers began to import labor, sometimes at great cost. They have recently found it cheaper and just as effective to put want ads in the newspapers of other Western cotton states. But when the picking season is over the workers have not saved a stake to last them through the year, for only one-half of one percent make as much as $21 a week, and half of them average $7.95 a week or less. Until this condition is changed they must have government assistance during part of the year—or starve.

Terrorism in Minnesota

A series of mass trials of former WPA workers is now in progress in Minnesota and deserves national attention. These workers were among those who expressed their indignation when the 1939 WPA appropriation law went into effect on July 1. Like other WPA workers all over the country, they went on strike and picketed the projects where they had been employed. How much violence they used, if any, in seeking to prevent other WPA men from working is a matter for court decision. It is worthy of note that the Minneapolis police, who had no reason to be friendly, arrested only nine people, of whom three were set free and the other six were given nominal fines. Although heretofore WPA administrators have uniformly suspended work on projects where there was a dispute, this time different tactics were employed. About 140 persons were arrested on the ground that they had violated the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act by trying to keep needy persons from working under it. If found guilty, they can be fined $10,000 and imprisoned for two years.

People in Minneapolis will tell you that these cases are an attempt to weed out undesirable radicals. Whatever you may think of cases of this kind for such a purpose, the first group of defendants, at any rate, contains no such leaders, but ordinary rank-and-file men. Already the cases have done the Roosevelt regime great harm in Minnesota. People are saying, "You can't strike against the government—but you can vote against the administration." It seems quite clear that the federal machinery is being used by people in Minnesota who are trying to bully and intimidate all labor for their own purposes.

Happy Aunt Amalia

Somebody in Germany wrote to somebody in America the other day, according to The Hour, the lively anti-Nazi sheet. The letter included the words, "We are all well and happy, but Aunt Amalia is the happiest of all." The point of this is that Aunt Amalia has been dead for seven years. This is an old familiar device for evading the censorship and it is interesting to see it crop up again. The human spirit seems to have an almost incorrigible elasticity; no dictator can get quite all the bounce out of it.

News Notes of a Week

One hundred forty members of the outlawed Hungarian "Death Legion," a fascist organization, were arrested, charged with plotting a "putsch" against the government. . . . German rations became more severe. Fish, though unrationed, was practically unobtainable,

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and other unrationed foodstuffs had all but disappeared. Prices of imported fats were rising, Norwegian whale oil having nearly tripled in price since the war began. Soap, already strictly rationed, was being standardized, and it was expected that soon there would be only one kind. . . . General Smigly-Rydz, interned in Rumania, was transferred from one town to another, because the other officers "took an unfriendly attitude toward him."

Mayor Maury Maverick of San Antonio, Texas, was indicted by a district grand jury on charges of poll-tax irregularities. Mr. Maverick said that the charges were a political smear, and that they wouldn't keep him from doing a good job as mayor. . . . John L. Lewis was reported to have told the executive committee of the CIO, in session after the convention had closed, that he was determined to rid the CIO of all Communist influence. . . . Workers in Chrysler auto plants were voting overwhelmingly in favor of authorizing their leaders to call a strike if necessary. Negotiations between the United Auto Workers and the company were still going on, although contracts had expired. . . . Production of steel ingots in the United States reached 90 percent of theoretical capacity and, on the basis of future orders, was expected to stay at that figure for the next two months. . . . Newspapers reported that Hitler plays "Beaver" while riding around in his limousine. Americans know better. What he really plays is "Red rover, Red rover, come over, come over."

The Attack on Civil Liberties

PERSONS old enough to remember what happened in the United States between 1917 and 1920 watched some recent events with a sinking of the heart. During American participation in the Great War, civil liberties in this country were much curtailed, far more so than was necessary even under the broadest interpretation of the emergency. The persecution of all dissenters, and especially liberals and radicals, continued for a full two years after the war was over. A. Mitchell Palmer, whose slogan as a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination was "The Fighting Quaker" but who suffered from numerous puns on this phrase, such as "the Faking Quitter," "the Quaking Fighter," etc., instituted a reign of terror. Men who had committed no crime were given long prison sentences. Raids were made on the headquarters of organizations, most of them entirely innocent and all of them theoretically protected by law. Typewriters, desks and files were destroyed, innocent people, including clerical workers and casual visitors, were cruelly beaten—activities in which, after the war, the American Legion gleefully joined. (We are sure that many Legionnaires of today remember these activities with shame and regret.) Teachers were terrorized; many states passed laws penalizing individuals for their political beliefs regardless of their actions. The whole episode is one upon which decent Americans can only look back with humiliation.

Today, when the United States is not at war and when everyone declares a firm intention of staying out, we see an ominous return to these activities. Witch-hunting is again in progress all over the country. Stimulated by an indiscreet public statement of Attorney General Frank Murphy, a statement which he did his best to counteract as soon as he realized its harmful effect, zealous patriots everywhere have begun to look for spies, a term that is pretty much equivalent to anybody with a foreign accent whom you don't like. It goes without saying that genuine espionage agents and saboteurs ought to be tracked down; but it is perfectly possible to do this without throwing the whole population into a ferment.

Even before the Russo-German agreement, Germany was violently unpopular in this country, and so was Russia, although to a somewhat lesser degree. The non-aggression agreement made the general attitude toward Russia approach that toward Germany, and the Tories have been quick to take advantage of their opportunity. The Dies Committee, in particular, is advancing its well known aim, which is to "smear" the Roosevelt administration in every possible way, with a new burst of anti-Communist activity. All sorts of people are put on the witness stand and permitted to say anything they please about the extent of the "Communist menace" and its infiltration into high government circles, the CIO, civil-liberties organizations and elsewhere. The credibility of such witnesses may be judged by the fact that most of them accuse themselves of having lied and conspired in the past. Some of their charges are probably true; some are undoubtedly false, and the truth of others could be established only with extensive investigation. Mr. Dies and his confrères attempt no such investigation. They permit individuals and organizations to be libeled on the front page of every newspaper in the United States and leave it to the victims to try to overtake the falsehood—if they can.

So serious is the situation all over the country that the American Civil Liberties Union and allied organizations felt it necessary to call in New York a few days ago a National Conference on Civil Liberties in the Present Emergency. Ironically, this very conference was attacked by Mr. Dies for its radicalism. At the various special sessions devoted to one phase or another of the problem, there was plenty of evidence that this issue is a real one. A dozen bills curtailing civil liberties were introduced in the last session of Congress and will be brought up again in the next regular session in January. Continuing censorship of books, plays, movies, the radio, the classroom was reported, and the predic-

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tion made that if we get into war, the restrictions on freedom of thought and action will be even worse than they were twenty years ago.

The Department of Justice, under the liberal Frank Murphy, is conscious of the dangers of the situation. Mr. Murphy has promised that civil liberties will be respected and his words were echoed at the conference by John Rogge, director of the new Civil Liberties Unit. Mr. Rogge said the department believes it can fight spies and saboteurs without encouraging the witch-hunters. He added that the Department of Justice intends to appeal to the Supreme Court all decisions of lower courts curtailing civil liberties.

This is a praiseworthy attitude, but those who lived through the last war may be pardoned for suspending judgment until they see how far it is translated into realistic terms. One Washington department, even though it is as important as Justice, cannot stand against the tide. A disturbing thing about the Washington scene at present is the number of New Dealers who seem to have forgotten all about their domestic program while they fix their fascinated eyes upon the European war. Some of them will say openly that the war is solving many vexed problems, while others seem to feel unconsciously that this is true. As we point out in another editorial, so far as the return of prosperity is concerned their hopes are likely to prove an illusion. It is equally true as to everything else. War solves nothing; if it postpones some issues a little, it only makes them worse when at last they must be faced.

The forces of reaction have been much strengthened in the United States of late. They feel that things are going their way, and they are helping the process all that they can. They believe in civil liberties—for themselves only. Those who believe in civil liberties for everybody will have to be at least equally vigilant, well organized and persistent or they will be pushed to the wall.

The Declaration of Panama

THE BRITISH ADMIRALTY, commenting on the Declaration of Panama, politely says that the prescribed neutral zone about North and South America, with the exception of Canada, can be an expression merely of the desire of the American nations, but cannot be enforced under international law, which recognizes ocean sovereignty only within territorial limits—that is, as a rule, three miles from shore. If the belligerents want to honor our wishes, therefore, the declaration will have force, but otherwise we cannot do anything about it. The comment refrains from saying whether Britain will honor it or not. The declaration itself asserts that the American republics "have the undisputed right to conserve free from all hostile acts by any belligerent . . . those waters adjacent to the American continents which they consider of primordial interest and direct utility for their relations." It goes on to say that the governments concerned will make representations to the belligerents to seek their observance of the zone, and will consult whenever necessary to determine what measures it may be advisable to take to "obtain fulfilment" of the declaration.

This is a considered statement of policy like the Monroe Doctrine, which was not based on precedents in international law and was not subject to prior agreement by those European nations toward which it was directed. Yet the Monroe Doctrine has been observed because reluctance to incur our displeasure has outweighed any advantage to be gained by violation of the doctrine. We have never had to use force to compel observance. European belligerents would now be ill advised to underestimate the feeling in all the American republics which supports the policy enunciated at Panama.

For the time being it would seem sufficient to patrol the neutral zone and to keep informed of the movements of belligerent craft within it—a task which, with modern planes, it is easier to perform than some of the critics of the declaration have supposed. But what if British or German commerce raiders should become active in the neutral zone, and the nation whose ships or colonies were attacked should strive to protect itself? Should we need to join the war on one side or the other in order to put an end to the hostilities? Or must we just fold our hands and watch the doctrine being violated?

Measures are possible which avoid both alternatives. For example, the American republics could announce that after a stated date all war craft of sea and air, belonging to belligerents, would be expected to keep out of the neutral zone. Any war vessel discovered in the zone after that date would be warned to leave it, and would be given her choice of coming to a neutral port and being interned or of steaming outside the zone. She would be escorted by an American warship until she had done one or the other. If she asserted her right under international law to remain in the zone, she would be followed as long as she did so. Such escort would prevent her either from engaging in aggressive action or from being attacked, unless the power whose ship fired the first shot wished directly to challenge the united good will of the American republics.

In the case of raiding submarines or planes, more difficulty might be encountered. But neither could operate in the zone for very long at a time without a base on this side of the Atlantic—or the Pacific. Such bases could be discovered. If they were on land, and in a neutral country, they would as a matter of course have to be dismantled. If they were at sea, the same

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procedure would be followed with the mother ships as with ordinary war vessels.

The British or the French could legally organize war activities based on ports in their American colonies. It seems unlikely, however, that they would do so contrary to our request, if they could be assured that we were taking effective measures such as the above to check naval action by their enemies.

Another possibility is to establish a convoy system within the zone for all merchant shipping, whether belligerent or neutral. In that case raiders would run the risk of being attacked and sunk by our war vessels. And if raiders could not operate, belligerent war craft would have little inducement to invade the zone simply to fight one another.

It seems to us unlikely, however, that such extreme measures would have to be adopted. If we convince the belligerents of our serious intention, the Declaration of Panama is likely to be honored in observance, even though its technical status in international law is questioned.

Storm Warning

THE STOCK MARKET is higher, steel production is inching up toward theoretical capacity, agricultural prices at last promise to give the farmers a better break. With the repeal of the arms embargo we shall build up a big munitions industry and the country will be flooded with war profits and the spending of fully employed workers. Business confidence at last is doing its appointed job. The index of industrial production is climbing like a steeple-jack. The war—bless its little heart—has solved all of our economic problems. Or has it?

Out of the subcellars where our best economic analysts study their statistics and plot their charts there comes a warning. It is only murmured as yet, and the chances are that nobody will pay much attention to it. Why should killjoys be listened to? If they are, it might destroy confidence again. Nevertheless, they are saying something important. They fear that within four months we are going to have another recession, and that it is likely to be even sharper than the tumble we took after our spree in the spring of 1917.

How can this be? The facts are simple, and unless something unforeseen occurs they could hardly lead to any other conclusion. The war boom is without any basis in increased demand from consumers either at home or abroad. It consists almost entirely in the speculative building up of inventories, as rapid and as much without fundamental reason as that which occurred in the spring of 1937. Exports for September increased only seasonally. The belligerents are simply not ordering anything more than they normally would have bought if they had not started fighting. They have built up reserve stocks; they are going on short rations; they are carefully husbanding their cash purchasing power. The utmost they are likely to do in the near future is to shift demand from one product to another. Even if they bought a lot of war planes, the money value of the most they could order would not bulk large in our total economy.

We might, of course, develop continued prosperity under our own steam. But one of two things would be necessary for that. Either there would have to be a large amount of capital investment in new durable goods—buildings, machinery and the like—or government spending would have to increase greatly. Neither is happening. There is no inkling of preparations to build new industrial plants in any quantity. Government, in spite of spectacular orders for military goods, is tapering off its total expenditures. The last Congress reduced the amount for the WPA; it refused to add to the housing or the PWA budgets; it turned down the "spending-lending plan." About next January or February the sharp cutting of government spending, coupled with the end of speculative inventory-buying, will hit us like a ton of bricks.

The economists who foresee this possibility think we should be prepared against it. They think the administration ought to revive the project of large-scale public investment, and push it through Congress if possible. They think we ought to provide for a rapid increase of payments to consumers, by expansion of the WPA. They are considering also the possibility of other emergency measures, such as a scheme to take excess inventories off the hands of business concerns, using them for government reserves against a possible future war crisis. If something like this is not done, our old goblins are likely to get us again while we are looking the other way.

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National Bolshevism

THE MEANING of Russia's new alignment of policy is still the central enigma of this war, and the diplomatists, so far as I can discover, are still guessing like the rest of us. From my own inquiries made on the eve of war in Russian official circles, these statements of tendency stand out:

1. The tendency to isolation had grown since Munich and the collapse of the Spanish Republic.

2. The Kremlin was obsessed by the belief that Downing Street sought to divert German ambitions and the German military thrust eastward toward Russia.

3. For a variety of reasons, some of them political and others technical, the prevailing view was that Russia should avoid active participation in the coming struggle.

These are the guiding lines on which Stalin has, for the time being, constructed his policy. It is one of cynical realism that looks to the aggrandizement of the Russian state by the customary methods of power politics. Stalin has advanced his center at the expense of Poland and he is now engaged in securing his two wings on the coasts of the Baltic and the Black Seas. He may, on occasion, use a revolutionary technique to serve his purposes, as he is doing in Poland, but the promotion of revolution is not his primary objective. That is, so far as one can read his mind, the erection of a barrier against the German drive to the East.

How, then, does he conceive his future relations with Germany? My own guess is that his calculations turn round two primary considerations. He may seek to divert German ambitions westward, with the reckoning that the war will then result in the general exhaustion of all three of the Western powers. It may suit him up to a point to lessen the efficacy of the British blockade by supplying raw materials and even munitions to Germany. The news, which may be authentic, that German technicians in large numbers are already being sent to the industries located in the Urals, points in this direction. But it would be astonishing if Russian help to her German partner went further than this. It will be so rationed as to leave Stalin in a commanding position in the later stages of the war. He cannot desire a decisive Germany victory.

The other half of this enigma is even more intriguing. War has emphasized the revolutionary aspects of the Nazi attitude. Information reaches me from an underground German channel in which I have learned to place a good deal of reliance. It comes from a source that has its close relations with the German army. This student of Nazi policy predicted accurately in advance each of Hitler's major moves, from the reoccupation of the Rhineland onwards. As far back as June, he predicted the alliance with Russia. What he now forecasts is the adoption of an attitude to which he gives the name of National Bolshevism. This attracts the younger and more adventurous soldiers, who have always wished to work with the Red Army. It also makes its appeal to the more dynamic sections of the Nazi Party. He predicts a coming purge of that party, in which the less adaptable of the conservative elements will be eliminated.

There is a good deal in the current propaganda of Nazi agents in Europe to confirm this reading of tendencies. Since the Russian pact all the accents have been changed. The London Times has described the abrupt reversal of their methods in Portugal. They now address themselves primarily to workers and peasants. They depict Germany as a workers' paradise. They insist that the German and Russian revolutions have been pursuing, by slightly different methods, the same aims. Russia has destroyed private capital: Germany has brought it under an iron control. The same tones are now audible all over Southeastern Europe, and one notes in German propagandist broadcasts a tendency to give the war an ideological meaning as a crusade against the effete liberalism of the plutodemocracies.

Is there, on the other side, any parallel movement in the same direction? As yet I doubt it. The Freiheit-Sender, the secret broadcasting station which works under Communist control from Russian territory, is as hostile as ever to the Nazi regime. But it is noticeable that communist propaganda in the West is now stressing the supposedly imperialist aims of the two Western powers. To that extent, in a purely negative sense, there is parallelism between Moscow and Berlin.

As yet one can only question the future. But I find my own mind dwelling on the daring prediction of this alliance which Peter Drucker made many months ago in his brilliant book, "The End of Economic Man." The tendencies immanent in the two dictatorships may be driving them into an ideological rapprochement against the resistance of their traditions. The two economies are complementary. We may be facing their ultimate fusion in a compromise fatal to all the values of Western civilization.

The problem for the West is whether it can face this revolutionary coalition without itself becoming the mere defender of things as they are. Can it give to its war aims a creative shape? There are forces at work that may achieve this difficult orientation. Something may emerge promptly for India's liberties, and the movement toward some eventual Federal Union for Europe gathers strength. At least this constructive idealism is at work, more conscious in its aims and clearer in its vision than it was when we stumbled into the last world war.

London (by air mail) H. N. BRAILSFORD

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Ham and Eggs

On November 7 the voters of California, at a special election, will pass on a 12,000-word initiative measure which, if enacted, would require the state to issue weekly for the rest of their lives at least thirty one-dollar warrants to all citizens over fifty years of age who have resided in the state for one year prior to the adoption of the amendment or for five years after its adoption. This measure—Thirty-Every-Thursday, or Ham and Eggs, as it is popularly called—has muddied the political waters of California as they have never been muddied before.

California is a state marked by sharp contrasts—geographical, social, industrial and political. It is a state in which the extremes are cultivated and the mean is obliterated. Social developments which elsewhere have taken several generations to work themselves out, have occurred here in a decade. It is also a state in which the vote has been increasing about 50 percent every ten years since 1849, bringing about the necessity for constant social adjustment. The sharp social contrasts which are apparent today have long existed. Recent historical research has revealed the truly horrible poverty and misery of the Gold Rush period, when millionaires were being created overnight. The contrast between technical capacity to produce and inadequate purchasing power has become increasingly evident of recent years. Potentially the richest agricultural domain in the United States is worked by an army of impoverished migrants. Tons of food are destroyed under the eyes of hungry people. The rate at which the middle-class groups have been impoverished has been considerably swifter in California than elsewhere. Many of them feel that they have an unliquidated claim against the state and they are prone, therefore, to rally to any program that promises a return by the state of the competence they once possessed. It should also be pointed out that there is a disproportionately large number of elderly, or so-called "senior citizens," in California. The state, in other words, is a blackboard upon which the contradictions of modern capitalism are charted for all to see.

In 1934 Upton Sinclair set the pattern for future political movements by coming forth with his "End Poverty in California" and "Production for Use" program, polling over 800,000 votes in his amazing campaign. A swift demoralization of the enthusiasm of the Epic campaign followed upon his defeat. In a very short time, however, the promoters realized that much could be done, in such a fertile field, with pseudo-reform "plans" and "programs." One of these latter-day messiahs was Robert Noble. When I first heard of Noble in Los Angeles some years ago, he was an ardent follower of Huey Long. But shortly Huey was assassinated. It was not long, however, before Noble was collecting nickels and dimes through his radio broadcasts for a so-called California Pension Plan which promised to sponsor an initiative measure designed to pay the senior citizens $25 every Monday. For reasons too complicated to explain here, a corrupt municipal administration helped push Noble aside in favor of Willis and Lawrence Allen, two advertising men.

Between October, 1937, when the Putsch occurred, and November 8, 1938 (the general election in California), the new Allen-led pension movement collected over $300,000 in nickels and dimes from the pension fans of California, and in the election that year managed to poll 1,143,670 votes for the plan. They had reduced Noble's idea to written form, changing the date from Monday to Thursday and raising the amount from $25 to $30 a week. They appropriated, in effect, the Epic plan of political organization, the precinct plan, and converted it to their own use and purpose. But whereas Epic was democratic and decentralized, they saw to it that control was vested in their hands. The board of directors is completely Allen-controlled and these directors are not elected nor can they be recalled. No local units are formed with voting rights.

Today the Retirement Pension Plan organization is undeniably the strongest political bloc ever created in California. Where Epic was diffuse and amorphous, it is compact and solid. The movement boasts 417,000 members who pay regular dues of 30 cents a month; it publishes a weekly, Ham and Eggs; holds 500 meetings a month, and its radio programs can be heard over a dozen or more stations in the state. On July 4 of this year at a meeting in Los Angeles, 64,000 pensioners paid 50 cents admission to attend one of the rallies. All of the political parties in Los Angeles combined could not have accomplished this feat. The movement has an army of at least 12,000 trained workers with an organization in every assembly and precinct district in the state. When they desire to do so, the Allens can start a continuous flow of eight or ten thousand letters a week into the office of any politician in the state. As a pressure group, nothing like Ham and Eggs has ever been seen in California. The rank and file are zealots in the cause; shouting and chanting "Ham and Eggs!" they are impervious to argument. Their newspaper features labor news; attacks the Associated Farmers, the banks, and the State Chamber of Commerce; and gives space to various liberal and progressive causes.

A complicated series of events led up to the political muddle which the plan has created in California. On

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the November 8 ballot in 1938 appeared Proposition No. 1, the notorious anti-labor initiative measure. Labor, desperate for allies, made common cause with the pensioners and an exchange of votes was negotiated. Proposition No. 1 failed of passage, but so did Proposition No. 25—Ham and Eggs. It is quite likely, as every labor leader in the state realizes, that Proposition No. 1 might have carried had it not been for the pension vote. At the November election Culbert L. Olson was elected Governor. In the spring of this year the pension-plan leaders presented him with petitions signed by over a million voters asking for a special election on the revised plan. The Governor had no alternative but to order the election. He pointed out, however, as in all conscience he was bound to do, that in his judgment the plan was unsound. Now the pension people have asked labor to repay the debt incurred last fall by supporting Ham and Eggs.

The results have indeed been curious. Reactionary labor leaders, such as the Vandeleur-Buzzell clique, have repudiated Ham and Eggs, but the progressive groups, both in the AFL and CIO, have in general endorsed the plan. Last year the Communist Party did not support the plan, but this year, after a visit to the West Coast by Earl Browder, they swung around and are now actively supporting Ham and Eggs. They have made, however, certain "friendly criticisms" of the plan. As a result of this strange alignment, the liberal and progressive leadership in the state has been paralyzed. To add to the already confused situation, Governor Olson opposes the plan but Lieutenant-Governor Ellis Patterson (who is to run against Hiram Johnson next year) has endorsed it. The liberal and labor leaders who support the plan do so not out of any personal conviction that it is sound or feasible but solely as a matter of political expediency.

The plan, as it will appear on the November 7 ballot, is quite unlike the measure that appeared on the ballot last year. The warrant feature has been retained, with some modifications. The warrants are to be liquidated by affixing to them each week two percent of the face value in redemption stamps which must be purchased from the state in cash. Warrants can be used at face value for taxes; all public purchases must be paid for at least 50 percent by warrants. A state bank is created with an authorized capital stock of $50,000,000; to start financial operations, the bank is authorized to issue $20,000,000 in bonds guaranteed by the state. While in name a state bank, authorized to engage in the general banking business and to act as a clearing house for warrants, the bank would theoretically be owned by those who purchased the capital stock, but neither the bondholders nor shareholders are given the right to elect directors. The bank must be used by the state, and all counties, cities, boards, districts, commissions and agencies as sole depositary for their funds. A majority of the directors are controlled by the administrator of the plan. Provision is made for the incorporation by reference, into the plan, of the present Sales Tax and Use Tax, and, in addition, a gross income tax of three percent is to be levied on all local cash transactions over a $3,000 personal and corporate exemption.

General administration of the plan is absolutely vested in the administrator. The Governor must appoint one of two individuals named in the measure. One of these was, in 1936, an active worker for Father Divine; the other was a few years ago elected to the City Council by Epic votes and consistently voted with the reactionary group then in control of it (one of his votes was against an extension of the pension system to municipal employees in Los Angeles). The administrator of the plan is to serve until 1944, when his successor will be elected.

The administrator is given dictatorial powers: his actions are not subject to judicial, executive or legislative review or control; his appointive powers are extensive and the patronage at his disposal is enormous; he can call special elections; he can increase the amount paid in warrants without any control through exercise of the power to "adjust" pension payments in accordance with the cost of living. His control over the state bank is virtually absolute, and this bank, be it remembered, is to be the sole depositary for state and county funds. He has the same degree of control over the warrant system. The system, in the first year of its operation, would probably involve the issuance of warrants in the amount of $1,248,000,000, which in turn would involve the collection of about $1,300,000,000 in cash for redemption stamps.

The immediate question in California today is: Will the measure carry? In November, 1938, the plan, as it was then worded, received 1,143,670 "yes" votes against a "no" vote of 1,398,999, being defeated by a margin of 18 percent. But the November election last year was a general election with a heavy registered vote in a hotly contested election. At a special election, it is generally estimated that not more than 70 percent of the registered vote is cast, so that the measure stands a better chance at a special than at a general election. Many voters, infuriated by the defeat of Governor Olson's legislative program at the last session, are in no mood to debate the feasibility of the proposal. They are going to vote for the bill in blind despair, hoping against all reason that a miracle will occur and that the plan will work. Despite this situation, it is my judgment the measure will be defeated, but narrowly.

The defeat of the plan will not, however, be the end of Ham and Eggs. Until broad reforms are enacted and a measure of real security is established for the masses, the menace of such plans will continue. What has happened in California can happen nationally. Unless some sound and adequate alternative is swiftly placed before the people, there is real danger

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that the pension vote will turn to reaction in the hope of making immediate alliances. The spectacle of Republican Senators being elected over New Deal candidates with the aid of the Townsend vote is a development of great significance. The demons of fear, despair and insecurity, as Peter Drucker has pointed out, are driving the masses to desperate extremes. There is not much time left to meet these needs.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS

Los Angeles

Can Hitler Escape His Army?

We present below a striking document written inside Germany and brought to us through the Friends of German Freedom, of which Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr is chairman. It is one of a series prepared by a responsible organization of underground workers maintaining contacts in many sections of the German population. We do not guarantee the authenticity of this material, but present it for its intrinsic interest.—THE EDITORS

EVERYTHING that is happening now (September 12) in Poland, with regard to Russia, in fact the entire political line, is the policy of the army. Hitler's role is that of a mere figurehead, while the Nazi Party provides the necessary terror apparatus.

The war will be waged against England. She is the enemy and it is going to be a life and death struggle. The German generals are firmly convinced that with Russian help, things will turn out better this time than in 1918. Coöperation with England was the policy of German capitalists, never that of the army. As long as Hitler was the tool of the capitalists he pursued this policy, which was at the same time anti-Bolshevist. It seems unnecessary to repeat that the army never cared much for the alliance with Italy. That was only a temporary step. The ally which the army wished was Russia.

It should be remembered that even during the Weimar Republic, the army had its eyes fixed on Russia, clinging stubbornly to Bismarck's idea. The fact that Russia joined the Allies during the Great War was always regarded as the chief reason for the German defeat. Consequently the only possibility of turning the tables on the Western Powers is an entente with Russia. At a time when the army was far less influential than it is today I told you that army circles were seriously discussing the possibility of shooting Hitler and his entire clique as traitors if and when he and his gang should dare to turn against Russia. This was quite real, fantastic as it may have sounded. Hitler reversed his policy.

Great surprises are still in store in the continuation of this policy of Russo-German rapprochement, surprises that will shake all nations. The entire world is wondering why Russia is mobilizing her troops on the Western frontier. Everybody is baffled; that is, everybody but the German military command. You must realize that a lot more is going to come of this Russo-German non-aggression pact, but certainly none of the things which people in Western Europe still believe, misled as they are by their own wishful thinking.

The army clique, the generals, risk war because they believe that they will come out of it victorious, not just for Germany, but also for their own class. And it is in this light that the leaders of the army regard alliance with Russia and the implications of the Russian social system. Bolshevism has not been the nightmare to the army caste that it has been to certain other groups and classes in Germany. On the contrary, from their military point of view they consider the present Russian system ideal. They have had time to study developments in Russia with extreme care. They know perfectly well that nothing is left of Lenin's Bolshevism. They also know that the ruling caste in Russia today forms a new aristocracy. True, private property has been abolished, but the ruling caste—and it really rules—is no worse off than the old ruling class. Above all it has power and a tremendous machine for enforcing that power, a machine which, much more than the Germany, possesses an idea that, even watered down as it is, still has a powerful mass appeal.

The German officer class has looked at Bolshevism in Russia with much friendlier eyes than at the "soft" socialism of their own Social Democrats with their "degenerate" pacifist hangers-on. The Bolsheviks never were pacifists. Bolshevism always was, and still is, militant as well as militaristic, and, from a purely nationalist point of view, its organizational efficiency has produced what Prussian officers would call ideal results. Under communism the military leaders may still have a chance—under a Social Democratic brand of socialism, never. Since they are all mercenaries by nature, these army leaders don't in the least care which system they serve as long as they can maintain their privileged position. They would much rather live under a German type of bolshevism, than in a democracy which would keep them down. The army leaders used Hitler in order to get what they needed. They had to swallow a lot; but all that is over now. Now they are on top and *they* intend to run the show.

While the war is going on, *they themselves will make the revolution*, a revolution from above. The

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beginnings have already been made. They will transform Nazism into a Bolshevism adapted to German conditions, with themselves at the top. In this war we shall live to see German and Russian Bolshevism standing united at Germany's western frontier. Chamberlain will get his ideological war, but under entirely different circumstances. That is the army's trump card. That is what will sweep the Western nations off their feet and bring them into deadly danger.

The German generals, recognizing the invaluable military advantages of alliance with Russia, also understand the potential advantages of the Russian system—or their own brand of it—for their own class. They found out in 1917 the tremendous power of the socialist idea, which eventually crushed the entire Prussian army. They know the anti-capitalist feelings of the workers and the lower-middle classes. If they want to win this time, they must come forward with a program which is worth fighting for, and Hitler can no longer provide it. But if they succeed in their revolution from above, *they* can provide the program. Socialism—though only "socialism" by the grace of the Prussian generals—can form the ideological basis, and they can fight on then to the bitter end against the external enemies and with the help of the Russians. But in order to accomplish this, Hitler and his gang must go.

There is a strong feeling of apprehension in leading Nazi circles. They are not entirely unaware of this army plan. Hitler himself certainly realizes the danger. He knows the power of the army and its advantage in a war situation. That is why he has been rushing up and down the Eastern front. He is deadly afraid lest a new national hero, *à la* Hindenburg, should arise from the ranks of the army.

Think of the effect in Germany, as well as in Western Europe, if suddenly leading Nazis are condemned in terrific propaganda trials, on the Russian plan, for having been in the pay of foreign powers. What if they are charged with having conspired with foreign powers in order to preserve capitalism in Germany? Even Hitler himself could be brought to trial on such charges. What finally would be the effect if great captains of industry were put on trial at the same time, executed and their factories nationalized? What if the records of the industrial combines were opened, as in the Russian revolution, and the intimate connection between German and foreign capitalists exposed? This would be the way to divert popular opposition into channels not dangerous to the army's rule, to create new enthusiasm for the continuation of the war.

It is part of the scheme to undermine the Nazi Party by letting all of the party officials sit in their offices instead of going out to defend the Fatherland. They are to be the victims, when the revolution comes. They are to be the targets of mass fury. Many of these party officials, told by their superiors to stick to their posts at home, have insisted on volunteering for active service. They know what the game is and they are trying to save their own skins.

The army is not a bit enthusiastic about the slogan the British have adopted: HITLER MUST GO. They could get rid of him much more easily on their own, and they feel that the British propaganda strengthens Hitler's position. I presume that this danger of a Bolshevist revolution from above is realized in England, and while Britain hopes for a revolutionary development in Germany she hopes to strengthen the anti-Bolshevist forces.

This war will show whether or not democracy as practised in the west is sufficiently alive to rouse the masses. It is five minutes before twelve. The democracies must mobilize all their energies if they want to paralyze the movement of these forces which may spell their ruin.

The following comment on the foregoing statement comes from the Central Bureau of the organization to which the author belongs.—THE EDITORS

The outbreak of war strengthens the influence of the military powers in every country and particularly in a dictatorship. In Hitler Germany, the strengthening of the army's position actually took place before the start of the war. That this war is directed against England, and began only after agreement had been reached with Russia, is itself a political victory of the military leadership as opposed to the Nazi Party. This has been confirmed by publicly known facts as well as by confidential information from military circles which has come to us since the beginning of hostilities.

In the past, hopes have frequently been circulated both among refugees and among bourgeois groups abroad that Hitler would be overthrown by conservative army circles. We have always rejected these hopes. The higher military groups in Germany have long since ceased to represent any kind of political unity. The conservative, monarchist clique, with moderating views on foreign expansion, both in the army and in German society in general, had a much weaker basis than it pretended to have. Finally, the army as an institution was enjoying constantly growing prestige and had every reason to be satisfied with the regime for the time being. In order to understand what is taking place now it would be well to begin with a review of the crisis of February 4, 1938.

At that time Hitler decided to launch his policy of foreign expansion and was therefore forced to get rid of the leaders of the moderate group in the army. He was completely successful in this, especially since the important industrial leaders were vitally interested in the expansion to the southeast and the conservative generals were left in the lurch. It was little understood at the time that the restraining of the conservative generals was bound up with an increase in the influence of

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the army as such. The reorganization of the Economic Ministry which took place at that time actually meant that it was taken over by the leadership of the Goering Four-Year-Plan Bureau, made up of representatives of the war-economy directors of the army.

After the army had been strengthened in this way, not only the influence of the party itself grew, but the power of the already strong group in favor of coöperation with Russia increased even more rapidly. The group within the army friendly to Russia was convinced that preparation of a war against the West in coöperation with Russia was the only policy which held any promise of success and that Hitler's policy of anti-Bolshevism was a criminal game carrying with it a threat of catastrophe. This group never ceased to maintain contact with the Russians, even during the time of the wildest German-Russian conflicts. Because of its realistic military arguments this group could hold its own in arguments with the party leadership much better than the conservative group in the army.

In contradiction to this, Hitler hoped that he, as defender of Europe against Bolshevism, could win the tolerance of England for the decisive steps in his expansion. The policy in regard to Italy only makes sense when considered as a means for bringing pressure to bear against England in this direction.

When it became clear that the change in English policy was final and that he could not continue in the Munich way, Hitler was forced to try to come to an understanding with Russia, if he did not want to give up his plans or be driven into certain catastrophe. An actual conflict between the German army and the Nazi Party is conceivable under two conditions. These are, first, that the war should develop in such an unfavorable way that it seems necessary to the army to make complete alliance with Russia, and second, that it should be possible to achieve this alliance.

There has always been a radical wing among the group in the army friendly to Russia. This group considers the nationalization of heavy industry as the natural form of war economy, and Bolshevism in its present form as a Russian model of its own National Socialism. It has dreamed for many years of a decisive war of German and Russian socialism on the one side against Western capitalism on the other. We know that in certain parts of the army the belief exists that now there is no reason why the Red Army should not be turned into an ally to Germany, provided that first the German army has nationalized heavy industry and removed the Anglophile Nazi leaders through a "revolution from above."

This report is a description of a not unimportant tendency in the German officers' corps. There are innumerable reasons why it is unlikely that their plans will be realized. However, in a situation in which the Russian orientation is forced in spite of Hitler, and the influence of the army is much greater, this kind of extremist tendency can, to a certain degree, influence the course of events. Even if the exponents of this tendency are not strong enough to achieve their goals from above, that is, without the help of a mass party, and even if it is extremely doubtful whether a revolution of this kind would be agreeable to the Russians, nevertheless they are infinitely stronger in Germany today than the defeated conservative generals on whom so many people in Western Europe pin their faith.

Gannett Woos the Doctors

LAST MAY the American Medical Association held a convention in St. Louis and said a thousand times no to the Wagner health bill. Warning the administration to keep its political hands off the medical profession, AMA delegates chose as their new chief a man noted for his conservative opinions: Dr. Nathan B. Van Etten of New York. But probably few delegates realized, when they gave him their votes, that Dr. Van Etten was deep in politics himself. For the new head of the AMA is a member of the Physicians' Committee for Free Enterprise in Medicine. And the Physicians' Committee is a stooge of Publisher Frank Gannett's National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, the same outfit that spent more than $300,000 to defeat the court plan and first reorganization bill.

Frank Gannett has never lost sleep over the problems of physicians or the distribution of medical care. He is merely trying to bait disaffected professional groups into his "great middle-class bloc" against the New Deal. This year he sent between half a million and a million letters to "clergymen, dentists, lawyers, heads of farm organizations and editors," warning them that the administration, in attempting to "regiment" doctors, was taking the first step toward "conquering" the free middle class.

For months Gannett has been ardently wooing doctors in New York State and in the Middle West. His greatest success has been in New York City, home of the largest and most powerful medical societies in the country. As anti-New Deal propaganda he sends Manhattan doctors personal, signed letters, hundred-word wires, well chosen books and pamphlets, free subscriptions to his magazine America's Future—everything but patients.

Last winter Gannett gave a formal dinner at the Plaza Hotel for some fifty "Park Avenue" physicians who were asked to bring as guests a small group of

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their wealthiest patients. After this rush party, such eminent men as Dr. Charles Gordon Heyd, former president of the AMA, Dr. John A. Hartwell, former president of the New York Academy of Medicine, Dr. Samuel Kopetzky, editor of the official New York Medical Week, and Dr. Haven Emerson, public-health expert of Columbia, appeared as sponsors of the Physicians' Committee. Many members of the committee sincerely believed that they were safeguarding the honor and privileges of their profession by banding together against the Wagner bill. Certainly very few doctors who gave the committee from ten to one hundred dollars apiece realized that they were dropping their money into the political war chest of a movement which hopes, in the words of Gannett, "to determine the outcome of the election in 1940."

Here are some typical excerpts from pamphlets sent out by the Physicians' Committee. Most of the material is drawn up by Gannett's three musketeers: Sumner Gerard, former Representative Samuel W. Pettengill of Indiana and Dr. Edward Aloysius Rumely.

"Can politics treat appendicitis?"

"Do you want your own doctor or a jobholder?"

"What is government by blackjack?" [A reference to the administration's prosecution of the AMA for harrying Washington's Group Health Association.]

"The Wagner bill is the most dangerous piece of legislation that has been offered to Congress. . . . It authorizes the federal government to spend annually an unlimited sum. . . . In these blank-check authorizations are found the bill's greatest vice, its major jokers, its biggest and blackest niggers in the woodpile." (This is a deliberate distortion. The Wagner bill proposes to add the modest sum of $80,000,000 to the federal public-health budget next year. According to the Technical Committee on Medical Care, if the bill should be passed, the total state and federal appropriations would reach a peak of $850,000,000 at the end of ten years.) All Gannett worries about is taxation and "government repression." Nowhere in his propaganda is there any discussion of the nation's health, or any program of medical care for the needy "one-third."

Since Gannett's appeals touch only prosperous physicians with prosperous patients, a large number of AMA members resent his meddling in their affairs. In Brooklyn, last spring, the Kings County Medical Society passed a resolution dissociating the action of those of its officers who had joined Gannett's committee from the membership at large. Several men, including Dr. Philip Nash, president of the society, promptly resigned from Gannett's committee, frankly admitting that they had been unaware of its true purpose.

When a similar resolution was introduced at a recent meeting of the New York County Medical Society, the chairman, Dr. Howard Fox (a member of the Gannett committee), tried to hand it over to a special minority committee of some twenty physicians (about one-third of them Gannett men). But in a storm of hisses and boos the doctors demanded that a vote be taken on an open and immediate discussion of the proposed resolution. After much quoting from Roberts' "Rules of Order," Dr. Fox and the society's secretary (also a Gannett man) counted the members who rose for votes in the thickly crowded auditorium. The score: seventy-eight for immediate discussion, ninety-eight for reference to the minority committee. Again a storm of catcalls as the dignified doctors growled about killing the ump. Dr. Fox was forced to appoint tellers. The checked vote showed 279 for discussion, 160 against.

A number of doctors, most of whom were not supporters of the Wagner bill, rose and denounced Gannett's political activities. The bombshell of the meeting was a short, quiet speech by Dr. Bernard Denzer, who told his colleagues what every newspaperman knows about Gannett's right-hand man, Dr. Edward A. Rumely. Imprisoned for German propaganda activities during the war, he turned up in 1933 as executive secretary of the Committee for the Nation, an inflationary group which sponsored Father Coughlin and fed Hearst with editorials for two years. In 1934 there were rumors about his friendly connections with Nazi chieftains.

Almost unanimously the meeting passed the resolution informing the public that Frank Gannett did not speak for organized medicine. After the meeting, eight or ten prominent members slid quietly out of Gannett's committee. Among the first to leave was Dr. Fox.

This opposition to Gannett does not mean that the majority of New York doctors favor the Wagner health bill. It means merely that they wish free, open discussions and a good measure of democracy in their society meetings. To achieve this end the progressive rank-and-file members of the New York County society will probably select a group of independent opposition candidates to run in the coming society election.

FELICE SWADOS

Despair

No ships leave for that country, and no slick
Luxury liners complete with hostesses
For the healthy, and clean cups for the sick.
You travel clear of a ticket and the distresses
Of packing, but always surprised to arrive,
Though seeming always to be native there.
Exploring it, you wonder to come out alive,
And quiet, can scarcely breathe the difficult air.
The plains are dry, the cliffs hard on the heart,
The cities crowded and lonely, most at night.
All seasons are the same, the climate numb.
It is a place without a time, apart
From every new desire and old delight.
The exile learns its language, and is dumb.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

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A War Election in Canada

CANADA, IN THE MIDST of a war which her people on the whole are taking with great seriousness, is confronted by a disturbing domestic situation. Although surprisingly little has been said about it in the American press, Quebec is far less wholehearted in her support of the war than are the other provinces. The provincial election that is coming on October 25 may have extremely serious consequences.

When Premier Maurice Duplessis of Quebec protests against the infringement of civil liberties, it is clearly a case of man bites dog. But this is only one of the bewildering aspects of the electoral campaign that has set French Canada on its ear in the second month of the war.

Outside of Quebec, Duplessis is known primarily as the father of the infamous padlock law. This piece of legislation empowers the police to padlock any premises harboring "communists" or "communist" literature without recourse to the courts. But it appears that M. Duplessis has not spent all his time defending the rugged coasts of Quebec from the Red invasion. In the three years of his rule the provincial debt has mounted by some $200,000,000. Visible results of this enormous expenditure are slender indeed. A couple of months ago Duplessis was beseeching a stone-deaf government at Ottawa to replenish the empty provincial treasury with a loan of $35,000,000. And then the outbreak of the war suggested a means of recouping his prestige.

The French have been the step-children of Canadian Confederation. Standards of living among them are far beneath those elsewhere in the country. They are helots in their own province. While the ratio of unskilled workers and modest farmers in their midst is disproportionately high, they are scarcely represented at all among the upper bourgeoisie of the land. This economic inferiority has relegated their language and culture to a subordinate status. The American and Anglo-Canadian trusts have a stranglehold on the rich resources of the province; the public of Quebec has been bled white by vampire monopolies. The English-Canadians have borne their "white man's burden" with insolence.

From the point of view of social conditions, the province belongs to a bygone age. Compulsory education is nonexistent; infant mortality runs almost twice as high as in Ontario. The Catholic Church, which has kept less abreast of the times there than elsewhere, bends its formidable powers to isolate the province from all modern, liberal influences.

Under the effects of economic crisis, the French-Canadians have become restive. Nationalism has progressed with seven-league boots. Significantly enough, three of the four organizations that appear in the present campaign include the word "National" in their names (in Quebec "national" means not Canadian but French-Canadian). Ten generations after their forefathers opened up the continent, the French have set about reconquering their province.

But their backwardness has made them easy prey for every reactionary demagogue. Out of their very desire for emancipation their oppressors have forged new chains. The national resurgence of French Canada is unthinkable without the defeat of reaction within its midst.

No matter how their economic aspirations have been frustrated, French Canadians know their mind on the question of foreign wars. Although reconciled to British rule, they have not forgotten that they came under the Union Jack by conquest. They are unwilling to be drawn into wars for the defense of the Empire abroad. In 1917 they defeated by force of arms the attempt to apply conscription in their province. Today there is a grim determination afoot to resist efforts to drag them into the European war. M. Duplessis seeks to ride to power again on the crest of this sentiment.

M. Ernest Lapointe and the other French Ministers in the federal Cabinet have barged into the fray to support the Liberals under Adelard Godbout. In the event of a Liberal defeat in Quebec, they have declared that they will resign from the Ottawa Cabinet. This would leave the door open to the formation of a coalition government that would introduce conscription.

But threats alone do not suffice. Ottawa has decreed that no election speeches may be broadcast without being submitted to the military censorship, *i.e.*, to M. Lapointe. M. Duplessis has refused to comply and finds himself barred from the air. This is what happens to democracy during the best of wars fought in its name.

The entry into the lists of l'Action Liberale Nationale, headed by Paul Gouin, transforms the contest into a three-cornered fight. In 1935 Gouin collaborated with Duplessis to defeat the Liberal government of the time: today he accuses his regime of dictatorship, lack of sincerity and venality. Whereas Duplessis takes the ever popular issue of provincial autonomy as the keynote of his campaign, Gouin gives more prominence to the war question. In the event of unlimited Canadian participation he threatens to pull the province out of confederation.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, Quebec will continue as a major headache for the Canadian government in the war. In hundreds of French villages where lordly stone churches tower over wooden huts, there are rumblings of revolt. M. Duplessis has already given the pro-imperialist English press pause in its attacks on the timorous war policies of the Mackenzie King government. There is greater appreciation of the delicacy of the position of those who hold the reins of power at Ottawa.

WILLIAM STOKES

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Washington Notes

Making Political Profits Out of War

AS THESE NOTES ARE WRITTEN, the Senate's approval of the neutrality bill—or, according to the isolationists, the bill to put us half in, half out of war—is almost certain. Only a wholly unanticipated European armistice, or a blunder by the White House, can prevent its being given. The prediction made here a month ago that the bill would receive sixty votes now seems too modest. Washington is afloat with rumors that the House may refuse to concur in the eventual Senate-House conference report. It is understood that the Republican leader, Mr. "Pepper" Martin, would like to fight it. Mr. Martin comes from Massachusetts, and the powerful Irish-Catholic bloc there—despite the advice of its hero, Mr. Alfred E. Smith—opposes a change in the arms embargo. But whatever the House Republicans do, they can hardly win.

Supporters of the administration bill say that it accurately expresses the will of the great majority of voters, who want both to remain out of war and to aid in beating Hitler. However this may be, the will of the voters is not what has decided the Senate debate. Apparently with the shrewd advice of Mr. Hull, Senators Pittman, Connolly and Byrnes, who were in charge of the bill, outsmarted the isolationists. They offered a bill that, in the "carry" half of its cash-and-carry section was far more drastic than anything the isolationists themselves had dreamed of. It took away the breath that they had intended to use in their filibustering.

Probably this section of the bill, with its blanket prohibition of the use of American shipping in trade with belligerent countries, is 51-percent sincere, 49-percent slick. It will almost certainly be softened, either in the present bill or in supplementary legislation. Both the White House and the Senate leadership honestly want to keep American ships away from the North Atlantic war zone. But the ban on the ports of the whole British empire is political dazzle paint that, in due time, will be removed. Many sorts of unpleasant things would happen to our economy, and our unemployed rolls, if supplies of such commodities as jute from India and rubber from the Malay States were long interrupted.

What the administration has been unwilling to say, and what, surprisingly enough, the isolationists have seemed not to know, is that for about two years the administration has had a carefully drafted plan governing the use of American shipping in wartime. It was the joint work of the State Department and the Maritime Commission, and was supposed to have been one of the chief influences in the formulation of the Maritime Commission's building program. In essence, it calls for a juggling of American and British shipping routes. The British are to withdraw ships from South America, the Orient and Australia and use them in the North Atlantic. The Maritime Commission's ships on North Atlantic routes are to take their places. This scheme was discussed with the British government, but, according to informants here, it was the British, not the Americans, who were dissatisfied with it. It was understood here that the great P. and O. line, one of the most potent influences in English politics, had deep suspicions that, if Yankee shipowners were invited to establish themselves in the Orient in wartime, when peace came it might not be easy to push them out.

The war has sharply altered the New Deal atmosphere. In part, Washington is witnessing the winter of 1936-37 over again, when, as you will remember, the premonitory armaments program of Europe produced a boomlet in America. The same New Dealers—particularly in the Commerce Department and in the Treasury—who shouted for joy then are shouting now; those who worried darkly over speculative price increases are worrying now. Mr. Isador Lubin of the Commerce Department stated the fears of the latter group in a remarkable speech before the American Retail Federation a few days ago. It is a speech that those who assume that war has solved our economic problems should read.

But war has brought something new, a smiling, shake-old-man friendliness of business. It is a rare day when a conference is not being held at the RFC, the Commerce Department, the Treasury, the State Department, to increase trade with Latin America, and, in most cases, the government officials appear as jubilant over the profits the business men are going to make as the business men themselves. They are the same business men whose practices in Latin America have been spiritedly denounced by Mr. Roosevelt, but now somehow they have become patriots.

Munitions orders for the United States army and navy are now flowing out in volume; perhaps $100,000,000 will be pledged in the next few weeks. At least one airplane company has put before the Treasury for approval a plan under which it will go on essentially a wartime basis; the government will take all its production and grant it certain tax adjustments. Within the last few days, Mr. Roosevelt has seemed to commit himself to the immediate equipment of the IPF—the initial protective force of 600,000 regular troops and National Guardsmen. Probably this is not to be taken literally, for it would mean an armament program approximately equal to the British program of the last two years. Some business men think—perhaps mistakenly—that this would mean a resounding boom. The New Deal has thrived on business hate; we shall presently see whether it will survive business seduction.

Military experts here are stoutly unimpressed by reports of giant, 70-ton German tanks. It is agreed that, if the Maginot Line is broken, the weapons that will do it will be tanks and bombing airplanes, but the experts think that the relatively light tanks the Germans used in Poland will be more deadly than the rumored 70-ton monsters. The latter will be formidable enough in appearance, as big as the biggest American locomotive, standing as high as a two-story house. It is estimated that they will carry armor at least an inch and a half thick, impregnable against anything but a direct hit by artillery. But, say the experts, they will break through any military bridge the Germans can build, and the area before the Maginot Line is criss-crossed by small rivers. They cannot move fast, and probably will be easily "ranged" by French guns. Just after the First World War, the United States army had a forty-four-ton truck and discarded it. For the future, plans call

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for tanks between eight and ten tons, small, but capable of making from forty to sixty miles an hour.

Neglected in the uproar over the neutrality bill, the oil hearings before the TNEC have brought forth startling testimony. There are reports that they may result in a new investigation of the industry by the Department of Justice. Among other things, accusations of an extremely serious character—as yet, however, insufficiently substantiated—have been made against both state and federal regulatory agencies.

Washington T. R. B.

Other People's Money

The South American Bubble

GERMANY and England and France having gone to war, and Germany—the hated barterer—having been penned up within her ports by the British navy, the golden moment is here to rid South America of the German menace. At least so we are told. American business men can now rush into South America and seize all the trade which Germany once enjoyed. Indeed, so important is it that the President has proposed to revive his earlier plan to set up a $500,000,000 fund to be used for credits to stimulate foreign trade, chiefly, of course, in South America.

One gets a sense of bustle and haste and running about—the noisy clamor of a ladies' sewing circle presented with some sort of parochial emergency—in the weird news which comes out of Washington. One day it is a proposal to establish a band of safety, a security belt, around the entire Western Hemisphere from Alaska and Greenland to the Tierra del Fuego, extending hundreds of miles into the Atlantic and Pacific, within which foreign powers will not be allowed to do any fighting. Another day the President sets himself up as the sole spokesman of the U-boat patrol and calls out lustily from the White House towers every time he sights a submarine prowling off our shores. The next day Assistant Secretary of War Johnson warns that we must increase our land forces or suffer the fate of Poland. Then at intervals the President and the Attorney General rush into the movies and the newspapers and yell: "Watch! Spies!" Another day we are called on to find somewhere a half-billion dollars to enable us to leap in and take over the South American trade abandoned by the Germans.

Now what is this magnificent stake which we are called upon to go forth and capture? Germany sold last year to all countries south of the Rio Grande $250,000,000 worth of goods. What chance have we got to get that trade or any considerable portion of it?

Obviously, everything we sell to these South American countries we shall expect to be paid for. And, just as obviously, we cannot possibly expect to be paid in money. They do not pay us in money for what they buy now. They do not have the money. They must pay with goods. And that is what they now use to cancel the cost of buying goods in this country.

If they buy more, with what will they pay for it? To send us more goods they must be able to send goods that we want. Do they have them? The persistence with which the average American politician ignores the character of our trade with South and Central America is a little exasperating. These countries are large producers of raw materials. Not only that, but individual countries are producers of just one or two or three raw materials. This is one of the curses of the Latin American economy, that they are dependent on only a few crops or commodities like some of our American one-crop states, and are hence likely to be plunged into desperate depressions by dislocations of that output.

As it happens, these countries are not economic allies but economic competitors of ours. The Argentine, for instance, has grain—wheat and corn—and meat and wool. Run through the list of countries and you will find them producing in abundance cotton, beans, petroleum, fruits, meat, coffee, copper and sugar. Not only do we stand in no need of these things, with the exception of coffee, sugar and some fruits, but our producers are deeply interested in keeping these products out of our markets. We do need coffee and we take an immense amount from Brazil and some of her neighbors. We take certain tropical fruits like bananas, pineapples, cocoanuts, etc., in abundance. But we already take as much of these things as we can absorb.

We are not likely to buy much more from South America until she produces things we need. And we are certainly not going to sell her more until we are able to find among her products things that we want. It is difficult to imagine what we are going to do with $500,000,000 of government money in South America unless we are going to lend money to various countries in order to set up credits here so that they can pay for what they buy with our money. And if we do that we may be assured that we shall never see the money again.

Germany bought goods from South America, not merely because she could pay for them with manufactured products, but because South America had the commodities which Germany needed. The same thing is true of Great Britain. Whatever may be the attitude toward Germany now, it is certainly not a statesmanlike position from the point of view of long-term peace to attempt to shut out from South America's markets countries which need her goods and can buy them. If we do not want her goods, what reasonable civilized excuse can we have for preventing her from selling those goods to some country that does need them? To prevent such a sale is an act of friendship neither to South America nor to those countries. If they cannot buy the goods they need and from countries which have those goods, because of some curious, inexplicable foreign policy of ours, then such countries will have all the greater urge for demanding colonies somewhere which they will own and whose products they can control.

The whole South American bugaboo about German penetration and barter has been a thoroughly dishonest one, got up for no better reason than to stimulate the fears of Americans as part of the propaganda for arming the country. And it is being revived now for the same reason that we are being treated to daily submarine-prowler scares, spy scares, Hitler scares—to create a war psychosis in the American people behind the effort to build up a large

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armament activity here. And it has been very successful.

To date in this fiscal year we have spent $182,000,000 less on the WPA than we spent in the same time last year. But we have spent $76,000,000 more on the army and navy. And, if plans are followed, this disparity will increase in favor of armaments.

There is a kind of busybody fever in Washington, an itch to be doing something about and in connection with the war, which is leading us into some strange side-alleys of public policy. Is it not time for us to calm down a little and look it all over quietly and with the eye and mind of reason?

JOHN T. FLYNN

Masterpieces

MR. CRAVEN does not say that the 144 plates in this volume[1] are intended to present his choice of the 144 greatest paintings from the Renaissance on. But they are all paintings, he says, which time has claimed for permanent glory—immortal possessions revealing the characteristics of the period, and the personal variations inscribed by men of genius on the general pattern. He has not left out certain paintings merely because they are already so well known through reproductions. And he has not sought always merely the best in a school, epoch or individual painter, but rather to show also the diversities in style and subject matter. If you want to contest his choice, then, in certain instances, you must stick to questions of taste and judgment and not proceed as if Mr. Craven had meant his volume to smack us in the face with assumptions of finality and strictly standard pieces.

How many and what Titians, Tintorettos, Hogarths, Bellowses, Raphaels and so on to include in a list that must cover such an immense domain is a subject that might afford us many an hour of pleasant or luminous conversation; but I cannot see the advantage of it at the moment. If I should say, for example, that two Turners and one Veronese would not be my choice, what is gained if I do not follow that with some fairly inclusive analysis? Or I might differ on the Diego Rivera chosen, or on some of the American painters represented to the exclusion of others. I might even say that Mr. Craven's central doctrine that the painter must reflect the color and character of the society in which he lives represents a theory I should not dispute but would want to have stated very carefully lest we fall into the error of admiring, for instance, a picture, as American, and reading unmerited painting values in it because it happens to fit some notion we have at the back of our heads as to what "American" is. But such brief raids as these into opinion and esthetic values would as usual remain nothing very much but reviewer's patter.

Facing each plate is an annotation in which the editor gives an analysis of the painting, or a comment on the thought or tendency represented, or some correction of mistaken conceptions regarding the artist, or the opinion of some famous personage, and so forth and so on. The variety of approach in these pieces of around three hundred words is notable; their very brevity often adds to their free and round evaluations. Without any effect of crowding, an immense amount is often said, a full and rich and often moving attitude is revealed. And very wisely, the comment is kept to the positive rather than the negative; the precious time is used for pointing out the great virtues and the excitements of the painting rather than for giving us a pocket lecture on its defects. Of these 144 annotations some of the best are for Titian, Correggio, Dürer, Breughel, Rubens, Holbein and Goya. Some of the failures are for El Greco, Watteau, Ingres, Reynolds, Van Dyke, Botticelli and especially Duccio—they are, furthermore, sometimes astonishingly outside the know in painting, it seems to me. For that matter, even in some of the best of Mr. Craven's notes, as cited above, I get the impression of a kind of thinking that is not from within the art itself—a painter at least will know at once what I mean and that it has nothing to do with using technical terms.

The truth is— But first I hasten to say that this is an engaging book, what with so many good plates and such variety in them, and with the enthusiasm, pugnacity and human impulse that Mr. Craven shows, together with the energy and whack and warmth and even eloquence that often appear in his writing. As we go on from plate to plate there is a certain betting match, as it were, on who wins the next race, on how this art or that, this or that painting, will come out in this series of ratings that is being chalked up. To say this is to pay certainly a kind of tribute. The truth I wanted to say, however, is that this excitement and pleasure are what I got from the book much more than any sense of distinguished opinion or taste. What solidity there may be to it is for the most part human rather than from within the life, or plane of art; and however human art may be, there certainly must come a point where the difference begins between it and life and where another sort of perception is required, and a peculiar and special distinction and taste prerequisite.

Obviously some paintings are almost impossible to reproduce with even a tenth of truth. But in many of these plates the success attained is remarkable. One serious defect in the volume, however, could have been easily avoided: the dimensions of the paintings are not given. The two Titians, for example, "Christ Crowned with Thorns" and "Bacchus and Ariadne," might, for all we could tell from the plates, be the same size, which they by no means are. But size is an organic element in art, visual art, especially; and not to know the original dimensions that the more or less uniform plates of this volume set out from is too bad.

STARK YOUNG

[1] A Treasury of Art Masterpieces from the Renaissance to the Present Day, with an introduction and descriptive text. Edited by Thomas Craven. New York: Simon and Schuster. 590 pages. $10.

Candlewicks

Age has its merriment as well as youth
And either one goes flying
And either one, to tell the truth,
Is a time for dying.

Be, therefore, your own ancestor when callow
And your own son when sere:
For wicks, when wind is at the tallow,
Bend and veer.

WITTER BYNNER

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The Bandwagon

The report of the chief alienist of the French state mental institutions says that while last year there were 67 individuals at St. Maurice—the French St. Elizabeth—who believed they were Hitler, this year only 22 patients were treated for that kind of megalomania. – *News item in The Washington (D. C.) Evening Star.*

The European war has caused cancellation of the world convention of the WCTU, Mrs. Ella A. Boole, president, announced. The organization's work already has been affected seriously by the hostilities. "War increases drinking and so many other bad things," she said. – *News item in The New York World-Telegram.*

GOERING LEAVES FOR FRONT TO ADD WEIGHT TO DRIVE. – *Inspired headline in The San Diego Tribune.*

Mene, Mene

Mind Your Manners, by The Dowager. Test your knowledge of correct social usage. . . . Q. Should you wipe the lipstick off your finger by rubbing it on the wall? A. Yes. – *From a department in The Logansport (Ind.) Press.*

Esprit de Corpse

The drab, ill fitting, unattractive uniform may be highy effective to hide from the enemy, but it falls far short of building up any *esprit de corps*. Even though the bright colors might make troops more visible, such a tactical disadvantage would be more than offset by the soldier's better frame of mind. – *Dr. W. F. Lorenz of the University of Wisconsin, quoted in Science Letter.*

The Wolf and the Sheepskin

The most important educational event of the past year was the continued decline in the rate of return on invested capital. . . . – *From "The State of the University," September 15, 1939, a report to the alumni and friends of the University of Chicago by Robert M. Hutchins, president.*

If He Died Before He Woke!

We found Mills, Arthur Ballantine, the Under Secretary; F. G. Awalt [etc.] haggard and red-eyed. They were still going over the bank figures for the day. . . . Sometime in the midst of all this, I fell asleep. . . . I rubbed my eyes and looked at an unforgettable picture. Mills sat on the other side. . . . Mills, Woodin, Ballantine, Awalt and I had forgotten to be Republicans or Democrats. We were just a bunch of men trying to save the country's banking system. – *The situation is the 1933 banking crisis as described by Raymond Moley in one of the Saturday Evening Post articles later incorporated in his book.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Two Communications

When the USHA Buys Land

SIR: Executives in commercial organizations are under hard discipline. They are compelled to cut every cost they can in anticipation of the next profit-and-loss statement. And any suggestion that present savings may result in the need for greater future expenditures seems to them impractical, more especially if those future outlays can be shifted to someone else—their workers, for instance—or even to a later year or month. Anything to put off the evil day, anything to enlarge present profits: this is business custom.

When an executive who has been dominated by these pressures finds himself in a responsible place in government, he keeps on trying to cut costs as though he were still in the game. He has no goods to sell and no profits to make, but his motor impulses go on operating in the old grooves. And if they did not he would be called to account by the press, by congressional critics, by rebellious subordinates, and even by lawyers, preachers and teachers, all of whose motors sing the same tune.

An illustration of this is furnished by the current management of the United States Housing Authority. There are, it seems to an outsider, two principles which control: one is that there shall be no disagreeable domination by "Washington" and the other is that there shall be low total costs. The first of these appears to be a favor-seeking impulse; the other represents the familiar importation from business. At certain points they conflict. For instance, "Washington" has not boggled at any local standards in most respects: but disapproval has met every suggestion for the acquisition of land at more than a minimum price.

It is interesting to follow out the consequences of this adamancy. In a city like New York, for instance, it means that few slums can be cleared and those not the worst; it means that city subsidies must replace federal ones; it means that workers must travel long distances daily; it mean that the city of the future will be shaped by the accidents of land speculation in the past; and it means that a functional reconstruction will be quite impossible.

Every old city has a rotten core. New York is no exception. Its slums lie in and around the business districts of Manhattan and the lower Bronx, and alongside the commercial and manufacturing areas of Brooklyn and Queens. The private housing activity of recent years, financed by the FHA, has been outside these areas, largely in the far reaches of the city. The duplication of facilities there for a scattered new population (most of which moved out from Manhattan) so injured the city financially that this year it had to reduce salaries. But when the USHA came into the picture, the planners hoped for reconstruction of the degenerate center and for the housing of workers with relation to existing city facilities, as well as to their work—this much, at least, even if functional rebuilding is to be rejected.

The USHA can get cheap land and so hold down costs only by building in places which have no transit facilities, schools, parks, and so on. It can force the city to construct all these necessities anew, though they already exist else-

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where, and although population has probably reached stability; and they can force the assumption of the extra maintenance costs forever. Because cities have to have housing and they have to get it from USHA. City services must be provided somehow after the housing people have had their way; and as for commerce and manufacturing, the city is expected to move workers backward and forward, morning and night, in an unhappy underground tide, out of and back into far dormitory areas.

What would have been the result if a high, even an exorbitant, price had been allowed for land? Costs would have seemed higher. They *would* have been higher for the USHA at the moment. But the city would have saved not only construction expense but untold millions in all the years to come. The workers would have saved the expense of travel, at least, and perhaps other expenses incident to semi-suburban living.

Of course a preference for city rather than federal outlays comes also from business. The secret hope, which is probably justified, is that there will be less of them if they are local. That is a sentiment which wars with other professions, and housing advocates would not accept it if housing were really their first interest. But business men, even those who believe in public housing, believe still more in sound finance; and the unbalancing of a budget fills them with horror. They do not believe in recoverables; that is a kind of expenditure which only industry can make. It is not allowed that a government can measure its success—as a private corporation can—by the amount of debt it can incur for earning assets. A government has no budget except that for current expense, to this way of thinking, and every outlay comes out of taxpayers' pockets now or in the future. The other way of looking at it, which is that certain debts create their own funds for repayment in government as in private finance, has to be approved as a preliminary to overcoming the domination of cost criteria.

There is, moreover, the consideration that a public body in acquiring land takes it forever. Its amortization can run for a thousand years as logically as for the forty or so which is allowed for buildings, in which case the *annual* land cost is infinitesimal. But, it is always said, the government pays interest for that money as long as it is laid out; therefore the debt should be retired and further interest saved. The answer to this is that the government can pay interest on such funds but that it does not need to if it will make such assets the basis for note issues. When a private bank creates credit it not only does not pay interest but expects to receive it. Why should public credit be penalized? Governments do not have to pay interest unless for some mysterious reason they prefer to. But this also is an idea which one has to escape from business to accept.

No one enjoys the prospect of paying rapacious land speculators high prices for their slum properties. And it is true that even condemnation results in a high average price. But no one has suggested any other way to get land than to take it and pay for it. And the costs may easily equalize if anyone will take the trouble to add them up. Whether the USHA pays more for land where housing ought to be, or whether the city subsidizes every subway ride for all the future to and from an outlying project, duplicates existing school and other facilities and maintains unnecessary streets, may be a choice which seems simple in Washington with a congressional committee peering over the administrative shoulder, but it is not so simple in New York or Los Angeles, which have high debt-service costs and no power to make investments with unbalanced budgets.

New York City R. G. TUGWELL

SIR: R. G. Tugwell's rollicking generalities about the motor impulses of business men have always intrigued me. I should like to supplement his remarks about what a business man does when suddenly he becomes a housing administrator, by setting forth my views about what I as a business man might do if suddenly I became an experimental economist and city planner writing about the USHA program.

Having gotten into the scientific temper, I would prelude my writing about the USHA with a look at the USHA. I would find that the USHA has assisted the commencement of more than 265 projects in all parts of the country, in communities large and small. I would find that every project was preceded by meticulous examination of the factors in long-range planning, such as the location of transportation facilities, utilities, educational facilities, industrial facilities, religious facilities and also long and short-term trends. If I thought there was something wrong in the location of one or two projects in New York City, I would try to give figures to prove that a bad decision had been made—not just say so. And in no event would I frame an indictment of a nationwide program based upon my own *ex-cathedra* pronouncements about two projects in one city.

By this procedure I would learn that more than 60 percent of the projects now under way are located on central slum sites. I would then try to find out the social and economic considerations which have led the localities to build some of their projects on vacant sites. Immediately I would be hit by the fact that the public-housing program is commencing during a critical housing shortage, produced by ten years of cumulative lag in the home-building industry. When many cities now have vacancy ratios ranging from less than three percent down to one-half of one percent, no sound housing program can *begin* by plowing under existing houses. That this second step will be taken is assured by the provision of the United States Housing Act requiring the elimination of an equivalent number of slum dwellings. But the first step is to build new houses, for dispossessed families cannot be put in cold storage during the plowing-under process, and besides we want an economy of abundance.

As an economist, I would appreciate that no successful housing program at public expense can succeed by complete acquiescence in the exorbitant values at which slum properties are held. Of course, no one would suggest that for this reason the slums should be allowed to stand. But a public-housing program which *began* by indiscriminately buying up slum properties at their presently held value would acutely aggravate speculation and perpetuate a rate of return not justifiable for rotten housing. Building *some* projects on vacant land, and draining into these projects some of the superfluous customers for slums, will gradually make it possible for public agencies to acquire slum properties at reasonable prices. It will also make possible the use of a revitalized police power to condemn without extravagant bribes spoilt houses that should be treated as spoilt milk. For the bloated prices of slum areas are not due to the value

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of the old and often obsolete utilities and schools which serve them, but are rather a capitalization of the vicious overcrowding too long tolerated by the municipalities themselves.

If I were a planner in public office, with a background of federal and local experience, I should be interested in a more than provincial effort to strike a fair balance between federal and local responsibility. I would find out that the USHA has not placed a $1.50-per-square-foot limitation upon land costs, but has merely provided that where land costs exceed $1.50 the locality shall bear part of the excess cost. That accommodation, in fact, has already been worked out with respect to one New York project. But it is obvious that one of the most serious problems confronting the USHA is preventing extravagant land acquisition by local housing authorities, and that the only way to reduce this is by recognizing the dangers arising when one government supplies all the money that another government spends. In terms of dollars and cents, participation by the City of New York in land costs above $1.50 per square foot for federally aided projects would be trivial compared to the total cost of these projects or their benefit to the city. In terms of sound administration, safeguards against extravagance, and promoting a feeling throughout the country that the USHA is developing standards which are operatively fair, the salutary effect would be tremendous.

And finally, as an economist, as a planner and as an observer of the popular psychology upon which progress rests, I would not dismiss the cost question with a mere truism about practicing long-term economies; nor would I satisfy myself with the pseudo-economic solution of abolishing interest charges.

I believe it of vital importance to the success of public housing that, without sacrificing long-term economies, we get housing costs down to earth. The USHA is constantly reducing housing costs. We are running about 33 percent below the PWA average, and in moderate-sized communities we are now developing durable 60-year houses, built under the highest labor standards, and with perfectly adequate internal amenities and exterior play spaces, at a cost as low as $2,850 per house, including land and non-dwelling facilities.

These are some of the things that I might try to do if, still as a business man, I left the federal service and later entered a city government. There are other things that I would try not to do. I would try not to become so alarmist about the problems of the city budget that I threw overboard the fresh and broad outlook upon the housing problem which I had had in the federal service. I would recognize that the public-housing program cannot thrive without reflective criticism, but I would never forget that it cannot live through a period of stress and reaction if those who should be its friends indulge in vague and unpremeditated attacks upon it.

NATHAN STRAUS
Washington Administrator, USHA

Correspondence

Voice from the Ranks

SIR: I request space for a vigorous protest against the hysterical red-baiting resolution adopted at the citywide conference of the American Labor Party. I am an enrolled ALP voter, and I am not, never have been, nor do I expect to be, a Communist.

It is axiomatic that when Martin Dies brings cheap cheers from the galleries with his denunciations of communism, he is threatening the civil liberties of all progressive individuals who do their own independent thinking. But at least we know Dies for the reactionary Garnercrat that he is, and know what to expect from him.

But what are we to think when the executive secretary of the American Labor Party resorts to the same sort of theatrical, hysterical red-baiting? And when the adherence to this irrelevant dictate is required of all ALP nominees, Alex Rose and those members of the executive board who support this resolution are threatening to destroy labor's most effective instrument of political action?

New York City DANIEL HIESTER KRUPP

Other People's Flynn

SIR: For a long time I have been thinking that there was something funny going on at The New Republic, and maybe John T. Flynn, in the current (October 4) issue, has tipped your mitt more than he meant to, more than you realized. As a rule he is such a dull writer that I put him with Granville Hicks in a special drawer, along with contract-bridge problems and other tortures that might improve the mind. But I did plow through Mr. Flynn today, and his piece on Moley's book might have been thought out, dictated and signed by Wesley Winans Stout. Or Ben Stolberg. Or, in phony dialect, by George E. Sokolsky. Moley, of course, is just another wise guy, differing from the wise guys at Stillman's gym and Lindy's only in that he parses his sentences before uttering them, and has a pipe, a Phi Beta Kappa key and professor clothes. I am glad to say I pegged Mr. Moley six years ago. Naturally I didn't think at the time that when an estimate was to be made of his Masterpiece, the liberal side would be represented by Nicholas Roosevelt, in The Herald Tribune, and the reactionary side by John Thomas Flynn, in The New Republic.

Los Angeles, Calif. JOHN O'HARA

SIR: John T. Flynn, like a number of (but not all) reviewers of Professor Moley's book, seems to assume that Moley's testimony is to be accepted without discounting. This in itself is a serious reflection on the value of his review. In him, as in Moley, the element of subjectivity results in distortion.

From a certain point of view, Moley's work is vastly entertaining and would be amusing, if it were not for the rather important matters concerned. What ought to be kept in mind is Moley's amazing egotism, which may not always be evident, but pervades his work throughout. He evidently felt that he was divinely appointed to save Mr. Roosevelt from his mistakes. And when he could not, he gave up, with the sanctimonious reflection, which constitutes almost nauseating cant, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

The value of the writing of a man like Mr. Flynn depends, in these times especially, upon the degree of objectivity which he is able to employ.

Philadelphia, Pa. J. M. COLLINS

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SIR: I suppose you yourself must be aghast at John T. Flynn's picayunish attempt to picture President Roosevelt in an unfavorable light on the basis of a few inconsequential incidents described in Raymond Moley's book.

What's wrong with Mr. Flynn? On all other subjects he is a forthright, vigorous writer who has something challenging to say, but when it comes to the President he just goes beserk.

Don't you think Mr. Flynn ought to own up and tell us what's really eating him?

New York City B. HOUSMAN

SIR: I wonder if Flynn is ever going to get hep to the fact that he is doing himself a disservice by his continual nasty attacks on Franklin D. Roosevelt? His rancor is a bit disgusting.

HARRY L. FETTERLY

Chicago, Ill.

Anksthay

SIR: On page 172, issue September 20, of The New Republic the crazy-looking words attributed to Mr. Ekins in his telephone message from Rome to London ["Mr. Big is icksay," etc.] were "dog latin." I wonder if either you or Walter Winchell knew it.

Some forty years ago, when I was about fifteen years old, "dog latin" was quite popular in my section among boys about that age. When all the boys and a lot of the girls learned the "language" its popularity dwindled. I have not heard of it since that time and never before saw it in print. Had I been an Italian censor that message would never have gotten by me.

H. C. R.

Atlanta, Ga.

Some News Is Good News

SIR: In the issue of September 20 of The New Republic is an editorial on "Queer Dollar-a-Year Men" who "have recently been called in to advise the United States Government." Among the queer men is listed General R. E. Wood, chairman of Sears, Roebuck and Company.

General Wood was not "recently" called in. He has been a loyal and friendly business adviser of the government almost continuously in various capacities since the beginning of the present administration. I do not know how conservative he is in his views, but I do know that he is definitely not anti-labor in his sympathies, and that he would not abolish the National Labor Relations Act or the wages-and-hours law. Nor does he in any other way fit the specifications commonly understood to describe reactionaries.

Clifton Station, Va. HELEN QUINN

The Enjoyment of Yah-Yah

SIR: May I ask you to reprint this from your October 4 number as the best example so far of the Split Libido common to the Fellow Travelers of Stalin: "I am now resigning from the Communist Party. . . . I can see no justification for the behavior of the Party. . . . The leaders of the Communist Party have tried to appear omniscient, and they have succeeded in being ridiculous. They have clutched at straws, juggled sophistries and shut their eyes to facts. . . . I cannot accept a change that is dictated by the exigencies of Soviet foreign policy. . . . Furthermore, I propose to do my best to defend the Communist Party." The quotations are from a communication by Granville Hicks.

If Mr. Hicks would change his concluding sentence to: "I have found out that I was wrong—you cannot serve democracy and totalitarianism," his hasty descent from the bandwagon even at this late hour would command respect.

Heywood Broun also would have tumbled off with more dignity if, after picking himself up, instead of mumbling about coöperating with people who are traveling the same way, defending democratic institutions, etc., he had said: "I was wrong—*You cannot serve democracy and totalitarianism.*"

The editors of The Nation would command respect if, in reply to Jim Farrell's challenge to "reopen the question of the Moscow trials," instead of asserting that "The Nation strongly and clearly attacked the Soviet trials," they had said: "We were wrong. YOU CANNOT SERVE DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM."

That is the lesson American Fellow Travelers, and semi-Fellow Travelers, have to learn from the Stalin-Hitler pact. It seems too bad that nobody in The Nation or The New Republic has had the clarity of heart and mind to say it.

Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y. MAX EASTMAN

[The editors of The New Republic have never said or believed that totalitarianism and democracy are compatible. We have repeatedly criticized the lack of civil and political liberties in Soviet Russia. We doubt, however, whether Mr. Eastman and his friends would have been satisfied except by a treatment of that country as violent in one direction as that of the unswerving Communist Party members is in the other.—THE EDITORS]

From The New Republic Mail Bag

H. L. Willis, a Mount Vernon, Washington, fruit grower, got hold of some New Republic statements by mistake and wishes to point out a few things. He is willing to treat people fairly, but he has had a bad time with the teamsters' union, who wouldn't let any but himself drive his own truck to market, and wouldn't let him unload it when he got there. Also he has observed some of the more notorious workings of the motion-picture operators. He winds up by wishing us no good and observing that "farmers the world over are anti-Communist."

The Progressive Education Association announces that John Dewey's eightieth birthday is to be honored by a series of meetings on October 20 and 21 in the New York Pennsylvania Hotel. Further details (tickets for a dinner, etc.) from the PEA at 221 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York City. . . . The American Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born wants support and funds (sent to 79 Fifth Avenue, New York City) in its fight to get Dr. Younghill Kang naturalized. Under our present laws citizenship is impossible for him unless action is taken by Congress—before which two bills in his behalf have already been presented.

The Second-Class Mailbox.—The ALP candidate for Sheriff of Dutchess County, Shaemus O'Sheel, brought in a mimeographed statement of his position on the current anti-Red activities of his party's executive committee. "They can't do this to me," the statement says. "While Alex Rose was in short pants I wrote the McLemore resolution which kept America out of the last war for a year." Mr. O'Sheel goes on to say that he never was for Hitler, and has been a member of every party except the Communist, but will be damned if anybody is going to tell him that in running for an office in New York State he has got to stop and fire a shot at the Kremlin. He is going to run for office with these beliefs and on the ALP ticket. If the party wants to kick him off it, that's up to them. . . . We are glad to rebroadcast an appeal from The Catholic Worker (115 Mott Street, New York City), which asks each "fellow worker in Christ" to send a little something, anything, to help in its work for the helpless. "We do what we can, as St. Paul advises, but our family is large. . . . One of the greatest hardships of the work here is that we so inadequately help people. Often men who need suits can only get socks; and there are those thousands every week who only receive breakfast when they need weeks of feeding to bring thm back to health."

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Books in Review

Lost Battalion

ALVAH BESSIE crossed the Pyrenees on the night of February 3, 1938, often losing his way in a black rainstorm mixed with gusts of snow. After a few days in barracks, he was sent by slow train to the little southern town of Tarrazona, at that time the headquarters of the Lincoln Battalion. On March 13, his detachment of recruits was hurried to the Aragon front. He had spent exactly two days in the lines when the Lincoln Battalion and the whole Fifteenth International Brigade were engulfed in the vast disorder of the retreat. Bessie was in a band of eighty men that was caught behind the Fascist lines; only four of them lived to reach the Ebro. Beyond the river, the battalion was slowly reorganized; it took part in the briefly successful Ebro attack and the months of costly defensive warfare that followed. Bessie himself stayed at the front till the end of September, just before Munich, when the International Brigades were finally disbanded. That, briefly, is the story he tells in "Men in Battle," [1] an honest and unassuming record of his own adventures.

Bessie is a professional writer with a novel to his credit, and short stories in four of the O'Brien anthologies, and a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1937. He is even a typical writer, to judge by the picture he paints of himself; you gather that he is unhappy, introspective, craft-conscious and full of literary memories that keep him from being quite natural. At a moment of danger, he reflects that he has a talent for saying the obvious. When he sticks a cigarette between the lips of a dying comrade, he sees himself as acting out a scene in a war movie. Yet for such a bookish character, the story he tells is strangely unliterary. He not only avoids the false devices of fiction but the legitimate ones as well—the little tricks for making characters memorable, the other little tricks for setting one moment apart from others and making us realize that it is a climax, and finally the sense of tempo and progression that would have emphasized the difference between Bessie's first days in Spain, when people were still jubilant over the victory at Teruel, and his final days with their approach to the débâcle. These are weaknesses that will keep his book from being widely or continuedly popular. Yet by avoiding even the necessary artifices, by setting down his experiences day by day, with dogged candor, and by writing, as it were, in the fog of war, he has achieved a different sort of effect, that of adventures as we might have lived through them ourselves. He has written not only his own story but that of the Lincoln Battalion, in the second and final year of its existence.

The first year was bad enough, as I learned at Madrid in the summer of 1937. The battalion of about 500 men had gone into action on the night of February 15, moving up to the front in motor trucks after the briefest and sketchiest sort of military training. Franco was threatening the Valencia Road and had to be stopped at any price. In the darkness a truckload of volunteers—twenty-six of them, I believe—was driven by mistake or treachery into the Fascist lines and killed to the last man. That was a prologue to what would follow.

On February 27 the battalion was ordered over the top after a wholly inadequate preparation by trench mortars, and lost a third of its men in half an hour. On April 5 it made another attack, somewhat less bloody but no more successful. Each time it should have been sent to the rear for rest and reorganization. But the Spanish army needed time to train its recruits, and meanwhile the Internationals were used both as shock troops and as line regiments. After helping to stop Franco, the Lincoln Battalion stayed in its trenches along the Jarama for more than three months, with only three days' rest—and those were spent in a ruined town that was being bombed every night by Fascist planes.

In July the battalion took part in the costly Brunete offensive. I was told that on the sixth day of fighting there were only thirty men fit for duty. That may have been an exaggeration, and in any case it doesn't mean that all the others had been killed or wounded—there were heat prostrations and dysentery and shell-shock—but I know that the Madrid hospitals were full of American boys. The newly formed Washington Battalion was disbanded after Brunete and the survivors were incorporated into the Lincoln, together with new drafts from the training camp. At that time bands of recruits were crossing the frontier almost daily.

In August the Americans were sent to the Aragon front, where they lost heavily at Quinto and distinguished themselves at the taking of Belchite, their most brilliant single engagement. In December they were held in reserve while purely Spanish brigades captured Teruel. But they suffered in January and February, 1938, during the Fascist counter-offensive, and had some disastrous days early in March, at the beginning of Franco's march to the sea. Only a hundred-odd men were left, but these were reinforced by Bessie's detachment of about 150, and a few days later the Lincoln Battalion was back at the front. The worst blow came on April 1, when units on either side of it gave way. Trapped by the Fascist advance, it lost all its equipment, almost all its trained officers and all but 120 men. Even that was not the end. American recruits were no longer crossing the closed frontier, but Spanish conscripts took their place in the battalion. And Bessie tells us that during the Ebro offensive, in August, two of these mixed companies went into action with more than 100 men apiece and were reduced after a few days to a single company of 52.

In speaking of these continued losses, it must be remembered that the wounded greatly outnumbered the dead—except in the Aragon retreat, where the Fascists killed the wounded—and that the missing had a habit of turning up weeks later and hundreds of miles away; some of them are still drifting back to New York. It must also be remembered that although these losses are exceptional in modern war-

[1] Men in Battle, by Alvah Bessie. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 362 pages. $2.50.

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fare, they are not unprecedented. In May, 1917, I talked to French soldiers from a battalion of Chasseurs which at full strength numbered 1,800. No less than 15,000 men had passed through the battalion during two years and nine months of fighting. The soldiers were grumbling, and a few weeks later I heard that they had mutinied.

Their losses were proportionately somewhat greater than those of the Lincoln Battalion, yet in every other respect the Chasseurs were vastly more fortunate. Their business was attacking the enemy, and they spent only a few days in the lines—sometimes only a single day—before being sent to the rear. They had good food, which I tasted, and army rations of tobacco and wine. Their equipment was the best available, their officers were highly trained, and their special deeds of courage were honored by *la Patrie reconnaissante*. The men of the Lincoln Battalion were never coddled in that fashion. They were often kept in the front lines for months on end. They got little food—the whole country being on short rations—and sometimes dined on a handful of hazelnuts. Wine was served them as a special treat; soap was unbuyable; cigarettes were so rare that the butts were passed from hand to hand. Their equipment was nondescript; their arms consisted chiefly of Russian rifles stored since the World War. Their leadership was sometimes inspired and sometimes pitifully inefficient; almost as soon as a good officer had been developed, he was killed or invalided home. Worst of all, they were fighting on foreign soil, in a country which, for political reasons, could not afford to praise or reward them. The fact is that two successive Ministers of War, Caballero and Prieto, regarded the International Brigades as Communist intruders and therefore failed to give them even a fair share of the limited supplies that were available. Negrín was much more friendly, yet even so, the Lincoln Battalion was sometimes reduced to a pitiable state. When Bessie's detachment joined it in March, during the Aragon retreat,

> . . . we found a little over a hundred men, disorganized, sitting, lying, sprawling on the ground. They had week-old beards; they were filthy and lousy; they stank; their clothes were in rags; they had no rifles, no blankets, no ammunition, no mess kits, no pack sacks. They had nothing but the rags in which they were dressed and the filth with which they were covered.

Ten days later, these disorganized troops were back in the lines, holding a position while the units on the other side of them gave way. They complained—the English used to say that they didn't get all their beef out of tins—they cursed their officers, threatened to desert, and still they always fought again, because they knew what they were fighting for. I dislike the word "heroes," which is used carelessly or mealy-mouthedly, yet the veterans of the Lincoln Battalion, and of the International Brigades in general, are as close to the real sense of that word as anyone now living. If they had succeeded in their fight, the world today would have a different face and a different promise.

There is one thing more that needs to be said. In Bessie's book, which seems otherwise so accurate, not nearly enough attention is given to the part played by the Communists in the International Brigades. It was, after all, the decisive part. That does not mean that all or even most of the men in the Brigades were Communists; thousands of them belonged to no political party. Again it does not mean that the volunteers fighting for the Loyalist government—and still less the government itself—were engaged in a great plot to set up a Red Republic in western Europe. On the contrary the aim of the volunteers—which in those days coincided with the general line of the Comintern—was to save and strengthen the western democracies against fascism. And the Communists played such a large part in the defense of Spain chiefly because they were willing to work harder and sacrifice themselves more recklessly than the well meaning liberals with whom they coöperated.

They had Russian help, and that too was a decisive element. Without Russian tanks and planes, the republic might have collapsed in November, 1936, when Franco marched into the suburbs of Madrid and all the Ministers fled to the coast. Yet a distinction has to be made between the Comintern and the Kremlin. The Comintern was fighting the Spanish war with all its heart and all its resources; the Kremlin was helping generously but—as it now seems—in a rather dispassionate and experimental fashion. We can imagine that the Russian statesmen were saying to themselves, "Let's see what the boys can do. They are fighting for democracy, and the issues are so clear that democratic opinion all over the world should be on their side. Let's see what world opinion counts for."

In the end it counted for little; it was betrayed by Eden and Blum, by Chamberlain and Daladier and even by Roosevelt. When the lesson of this betrayal was reëmphasized by Munich, the Russians, always realistic, were ready to make another experiment, in the opposite direction. There can be no doubt that Franco's victory was one of the steps that led to the Russo-German pact. In other words, the Americans in Spain not only were fighting for democracy in the western countries, but were also fighting, without their knowledge, to keep Russia in the democratic front. They were not fighting for the British and French empires, yet their defeat has shaken those empires to their foundations.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Regency Buck

The Young Melbourne, by Lord David Cecil. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 292 pages. $3.
To Lord Byron: Feminine Profiles, by George Paston and Peter Quennell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 296 pages. $3.75.

LORD DAVID CECIL'S remarkable study of Queen Victoria's first Prime Minister is registered by the author as a study in the evolution of a single character up to the moment in 1828 when Lord Melbourne, reaching middle age, but still "smiling, indolent and inscrutable, lay a pawn in the hands of fortune." As a matter of fact, the book is something better than that. It is, in part, a study in the evolution of the great Whig Party to which Melbourne adhered; and it is, necessarily, a study of Whig society in Melbourne's early years. Apart from a few source books like the Greville and the Creevey papers, it seems to me the clearest photograph we have of a unique moment of time.

Few things in history are more interesting than the evolution of the Whig Party to that moment in 1828 when

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Melbourne reëmerged into public life, and the party itself prepared to fight on the side of the angels for such causes as Catholic Emancipation and political reform. During most of the eighteenth century, the Tory opposition had seemed permanently discredited by its Jacobite sympathies. The Whigs were rich, comfortable, well born, and their vague liberalism was almost wholly untouched by practical action. In fact, their liberalism was like eighteenth-century Christianity, perfectly sound as long as it was not taken seriously.

'A man," said one of the Whig leaders, "can jog along on £40,000 a year." Jog they did; and when the waltz reached England, *circa* 1812, they jigged also. In its philistine mixture of good breeding, high living and bad taste, Regency society reminds me of nothing so much as the Faubourg St. Germain as depicted by Proust. The latter may have thought that, in creating Mme. Verdurin, he was drawing her from his own head, or perhaps from his memories of Mme. de Caillevet, but in point of fact he was drawing her out of the womb of time, where she was known as Lady Holland. "Within forty years of its zenith," writes Lord David Cecil, "the Whig world was completely swept away," leaving Lord Melbourne as an almost solitary survivor of the Regency sundown. Perhaps it is more accurate to add that the Whig world was not so much swept away as it was transformed into the Liberal world that gave England Palmerston, Gladstone and Lloyd George.

If I have emphasized the political and social values in this study of a youthful Whig politician, it is not to underestimate the strongly human qualities of his story. Before he attained to his father's title, William Lamb loved, married and cherished to the sordid end Lady Caroline Ponsonby, known, among other sobriquets, as "Squirrel," enticing, ungrammatical, exasperating, a screwball of the finest finish and the epitome of the Romantic movement. During her brief career, Lady Caroline essayed many experiences beside her husband's enduring affection—theology, novel-writing, Lord Byron, laudanum, brandy, Bulwer-Lytton—almost everything but Sapphism, which appears to have been, in Regency society, as dead as Queen Anne (1715). Lord David Cecil's chapter on Lady Caroline and Byron would be termed *magistral* by a French critic; and there is a supplementary chapter, even more beautiful, on the end of Melbourne's married life.

I venture to suggest that Thackeray was indebted to Lady Caroline for a little of the Becky Sharp portrait toward the end of "Vanity Fair." She has been the object of much sympathy on the part of Byron-baiters like Miss Mayne, but has been flawlessly summarized by the incomparable Lady Melbourne, her husband's mother: "Only troublesome in private, and a great bore in public." Lord David Cecil states that Byron never loved her in a true sense. But Byron never loved any woman in a true sense, as Mr. Peter Quennell convincingly indicated in his recent study, "The Years of Fame." It is Mr. Quennell, by the way, who has collaborated with George Paston in a valuable and amusing anthology of letters to the poet by various women. Among them Lady Caroline's are, easily, the most revealing, but even so they tell less of her story than one discovers in this fine book by Lord David Cecil.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT

Liberalism Goes to War

The Defense of Britain, by Liddell Hart. New York: Random House. 444 pages. $3.50.

LIDDELL HART'S NEW BOOK is probably the best on England's military role, as well as the last written before the outbreak of the war. It comes closer than the writings of most pre-war prophets to preparing one for the present reality, and hence may be recommended particularly to those today who complain about the dearth of "news" and regard the whole struggle with suspicion as a "phony war," because nothing seems to be happening, or at any rate nothing expected and customary.

Unlike the majority, Hart did not envisage the "future war" as a repetition of previous campaigns with their glorious victories and "decisions." On the contrary, he thought and indeed fervently hoped that, if not altogether unavoidable, it could be converted into a limited war with as little action as possible. A "phony" war, a playing for points resembling eighteenth-century strategy, would, he believed, alone assure a fair chance of survival to civilization. His main thesis is the urgent necessity for England to wage war along these lines, avoiding the great risk which lies "in trying to 'win the war'—by pursuing the mirage of decisive victory on the battlefield." Let the enemy overstrain himself by offensives: against the Fascist thesis of the *Blitzkrieg*, he would oppose a "defense by defense" as the democratic antithesis. It is "Britain's problem to prevent quick results" on the part of the enemy. Advocating this principle and working it out in detail, Hart makes a plea for patience, endurance, well considered distribution of forces, open avenues for new ideas and proposals, a final recognition and application to the uttermost of the land-power defensive potential, particularly strong in Britain and the Briton. Other things being equal, the defensive will be three times as strong as the offensive; that is to say, to ensure decisive success in modern warfare, the attacker must have threefold superiority.

In many ways, Liddell Hart is the exponent of Liberal thought in military affairs. On the whole Liberalism has done the least of its own leading and thinking in the military field and has contributed rather heavily to its own destruction; Hart's work may be regarded as a final effort of Liberalism to save itself militarily. It is an autumnal flowering. Staying within the amenities of British political intercourse, Hart minces no words about the suicidal character of the Chamberlain policies, warning the government that Europe was fast being made "less a political problem and more and more a military problem." Yet Liddell Hart's thesis of "defense by defense" is essentially a Liberal one. (One could write a whole history of Liberal military thought in terms of the word defense, winding up with the portentous shift in German terminology from *Reichswehr*, Reich defense, to *Reichsheer*, Reich army, as it has been called since 1933.)

But is his dream of war-making not also an "appeasement" conceived in order to avert for England the totalitarian form of war into which Europe has worked itself, thanks to the "appeasement" of the Chamberlains? Where are the supra-national interests or convictions that he maintains are held in common by England and the rest of

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Europe, when he declares that England's war aim is "the continuance of liberal civilization"?

War, he writes, will only be ended "when the power-lusting nations recognize its futility." But when will they, and how will you make them? Can they be convinced without a smashing defeat in the field? This puts up to the English makers of the present war a task which is at once imperative and nearly insuperable, of influencing the enemy peoples. How will they receive the message? How can they understand it, without an overwhelming disaster, in other words, an "action" of the sort Liddell Hart would avoid? At any rate, the present British leaflet raids on Germany provide one of several indications that the war on the part of Britain has been prepared for and is now being fought, to a certain extent, on Liddell Hart's terms. That is what makes his latest book so important for friend and foe and neutrals, if any.

ALFRED VAGTS

American Credo

Collected Poems: 1922-1938, by Mark Van Doren. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 400 pages. $3.50.

MARK VAN DOREN's position among his contemporaries is not one to be disputed or confused: a man of considerable, even a "distinguished" talent, he is frankly a minor poet, one more important to the audience of his own time than he is likely to be to critics of another.

Eighteen years' writing collected from six books—some two hundred and fifty old, twenty-one new, poems—makes plain the special character of his production. He is not an intellectual poet: ideas, abstract concepts, are few and inclined to be amorphous. Reflective and contemplative poems, rather than philosophical, are his forte. His chief concern is the natural world. A religious adherence, a philosophical scheme, is almost nowhere apparent. His temperament might acceptably be described as "pagan." Minutely perceptive, emotionally reflective, he is a "country poet," rarely anything else, for he infrequently assumes the obligation to achieve articulate concepts from his observation.

Precision of thought appears late in Van Doren's poems, and intermittently. In its stead appear accuracy of observation of the objective world and its subjective interpretation through emotional responses. From most of the earlier poems, except as a sort of accessory to the scene, even man is absent. In only two poems from his first volume—"Segments" and "The Sage of the Sierra: Emerson, 1871"—is there more than a fine lyric talent apparent. But in those two poems an obvious increase in the stature of Van Doren as poet accompanies a somewhat less obvious increase in the influence upon him of Matthew Arnold. "The Sage of the Sierra" is the first of Van Doren's "important" poems. In monologue form, it is a poem of some noble eloquence, addressed by Emerson to the men of this time—a poem finely resigned in tone:

> Men for themselves will find the good;
> I may no longer be their guide.
> Here where I would
> Let me abide.

True, there are far more ambitious poems, both in pattern and in scope, but prolific as they are of precise observation, their value is less—the value of fine *genre*. But the difference one finds existing between the earlier and latest poems is one of excellence of craft or diversity of observation, rather than one of increased profundity of concept or intellectual clarity. The latest poems, "America's Mythology" (1938), are immediate outgrowths of the earliest—youthfully emotional rather than intellectually mature, a certain impish deification of the commonplace weaknesses and virtues of Americans and their world.

Technically, Van Doren is not much more than an "accomplished" poet. Despite his extraordinary dexterity and precision, what he has added to the technical equipment of American poetry is negligible. Naturally, one does not mean that within the compass of his limitations his performance is not admirable, but only that what he has originated is less than one might expect. But to say that even among his countrymen he is not a "great" poet is not to damn him. His value is manifest: he has added to the bulk of fine American writing poems which none but an American, and no other American, could have added. Indeed, for authenticity of observation of regional America—the very mood and color and detail of it, from a mole's burrow to the sweep of a New England countryside in storm—Van Doren has no master among American poets, one feels, not even Whittier. That in itself, truly, is a sort of minor greatness.

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON

Cape of Good Hope

Watch for the Dawn, by Stuart Cloete. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.
The City of Gold, by Francis Brett Young. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.75.
Red Strangers, by Elspeth Huxley. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

STUART CLOETE and Francis Brett Young start from a common emotional background in their enthusiasm for South Africa and their bitterness that its English and Boer rulers should have wasted so many years and lives in fighting one another. It is with this in mind that each of them moves into action, Cloete choosing the real beginnings of Anglo-Boer antagonism as his period and Brett Young the years leading up to its most violent expression—the Boer War.

Cloete—as one might expect from a writer whose family is inextricably linked with Boer history—has South Africa in his bones in a way that his English contemporary can never rival. His African scene, with its incredible assortment of whites, blacks and bastards ranging in beliefs from Dutch puritanism to guerilla anarchy and witch-doctory, has never been described more vividly and adventurously by any other South African writer and is entirely unspoiled by Olive Schreiner weaknesses of sentimental emotionalism. His faults are not petty faults; he cannot help but see his people through a magnifying-glass and, like Thomas Wolfe, can sometimes exhaust his reader by repetition of a single passionate thesis—in this case the eternal cycle of life and death.

Using a group of characters very similar to those of "The Turning Wheels," he presents the sowing of Anglo-Boer hatred, first in its arousal in individuals and, later, in

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its maturity of race against race. When the English hanged five rebels at Slagter's Nek in the early years of the eighteenth century (and strung them up a second time when the ropes snapped), they created the unity that smashed them years later at Majuba and fought their whole army for two years at the close of the century. Any study of the period can only be what this book is: a hot and bitter story of oppression and tactlessness in a land crying out for peaceful development—Englishman harrying Boer, Boer enslaving the black, black ever ready to stab his weaker brother. Of all Cloete's human beings only the Bushman, passing his nomad life in his painted caves, emerges with clean hands, and pays the penalty by being virtually extinct today.

By the time Brett Young takes up the tale the conflict has changed its outward appearance and setting. The Zulus have been driven to the north, to reappear as the Matabele; the Boers have trekked northward too and set up their republics in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The big figures of Victorian South Africa—Rhodes, Kruger, Barnato, Joubert—have crowded Cloete's redcoats and guerillas off the stage. Freedom to work their land with slaves and without taxes is no longer an issue for the Boers; instead, diamonds and gold are flooding their farms with grasping foreigners from every class and country in the world. Big business and the smallholder have come to grips, and while they battle Johannesburg, "city of gold," is growing from a Boer homestead into a city of thousands. The unhappy story of Kruger's defense of his country is told again: once he has acquiesced in its being turned from pasture to gold, he is forced into the hopeless defensive action of increasing restrictions on foreigners within the State, in proportion to the restrictions imposed on him by their supporters without.

Brett Young describes this struggle with little of Cloete's vitality and dramatic sense. His book is long and packed with personalities who, whether English adventurers, Boers, Jews or Cape colonials, construct their sentences like old Oxonians, with a misspelled word here and there to indicate their lapse from grace. They seem to be in Africa simply because the book needs them there. Away from them, and their ineffectual loves and loyalties, there is much of interest—straight, semi-historical stuff backed by careful research. If we are unable to feel the people, at least we come away knowing their circumstances.

With Miss Huxley the scene shifts to the Kikuyu people of East Africa in an unusually successful attempt to recreate the tribal life of the native by showing it through his eyes, without benefit of white man's interpretation. But one cannot escape the conclusion that only with the entry of the white invader does the book really begin to hold the attention: it may be mildly pleasing, say, to recognize unaided the similarity between belonging to a Kikuyu circumcision "age" and a Princeton "class" of this-or-that year, but the traditional roots of the former are only truly appreciated when we see the white man attempting to impose his totally foreign laws and ceremonies. Though we are thousands of miles from Cloete and Brett Young we see many of the same forces at work, and are reminded, once again, that the center of conflict has already shifted from white against white to white against black.

NIGEL DENNIS

AN
Open Letter
TO
HENRY FORD

Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Ford, many Americans feel that you are sympathetic toward the Nazi regime; certain of your actions—including the fact that recently you accepted a decoration from the present German Government—have lent color to that belief.

We do not pretend to know how accurate is this appraisal of your political views. But we wonder if you, or any other business man, aware of what is happening to the business men of Germany today, could really advocate the introduction of Nazi methods in the United States.

Of course, this is the one aspect of life in Germany and Italy about which nothing has heretofore been published; for that reason we are mailing to you today a copy of a book that our house has just issued—THE VAMPIRE ECONOMY: Doing Business Under Fascism, by Guenter Reimann.

In this book you will read how industrialists like you are treated in Germany. You will also learn, if it interests you, the peculiar—and often insoluble—problems which smaller manufacturers, jobbers, retailers, importers, exporters, etc., must face; special chapters deal with what has happened to the Berlin Stock Exchange and to German bankers (pure "Aryans," too) under Nazism.

We think it quite likely that THE VAMPIRE ECONOMY will definitely modify any favorable impressions you may have conceived regarding the Fascist state. After you have read this book we will be keenly interested—and so, we think, will be the public—in your reaction; if you care to comment publicly on Mr. Reimann's work we offer you space for your reply equal to that occupied by this communication.

Very truly yours,
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To Readers of
THE NEW REPUBLIC

THE VAMPIRE ECONOMY is on sale at all bookstores; the price is $3.00. It illuminates brilliantly the one aspect of Fascist life about which little or nothing is known—and in addition it provides an answer to the critical question of the day: Germany's ability to wage a major war lasting two years or longer.

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A Reader's List

HUMAN DYNAMITE, by Henry C. Wolfe (Foreign Policy Association, 25 cents). A brief analytical survey of the European minorities, useful as a handy reference book. The author somewhat exaggerates their part in the origin of conflicts—for which minorities were pretexts, not causes—but it is undeniable that no stability in Europe is possible without assuring their national cultural existence.

THINGS USED TO BE DIFFERENT, by Alonzo Clark Robinson (Longmans, Green, $2.50). Mr. Robinson tries to prove that the Gilded Age was lustier than our own by his memories of such departed glories as Yale, the Grand Tour, Lillian Russell, Howard Gould's yacht the "Niagara" and the Paris of Rodin. Some good anecdotes here, but not enough of them.

JAZZMEN, edited by Frederic Ramsey Jr. and Charles Edward Smith (Harcourt, Brace, $2.75). A compilation, unusual for its thirty-two pages of rare illustrations and Charles Smith's quiet but lyric text. Also unusual in being the first book to give a knowledgeable picture of jazz, the researches being carried back to pre-Spanish War origins.

Fiction

HUDSON REJOINS THE HERD, by Claude Houghton (Macmillan, $2.50). About a woman and two men, one of whom is dead and the other very nearly so at the start. A subtle, sensitive book in which the reader gets everything at second hand. Mr. Houghton has an engrossing story, but holds it so long that it slips from his grasp.

A COFFIN FOR DIMITRIOS, by Eric Ambler (Knopf $2). Starting with a Turkish police notice about a murdered Greek criminal found in the bay, a writer of detective fiction decides to test his practical skill by reconstructing the life of the dead man. The personality that is excavated, bit by bit, from records all over Europe, is a masterpiece of pure, cool evil, a hard criminal intelligence that will fascinate students of the abnormal as well as detective fans.

Notes About Books and Magazines

Verve, which is almost if not quite the most expensive magazine in the world, has published a double number, costing $5, that is dedicated to the New York World's Fair. It contains 220 portraits of statesmen, mythological figures, biblical characters and beautiful women—painted, sculptured or photographed by artists from the eleventh century to our own times.

The autumn issue of The Kenyon Review—now almost the only American magazine with purely literary interests—features an inquest into the present state of poetry. Herbert Read's section, on poetry in England, is the most interesting of the three. Robert Penn Warren's, on poetry in the United States, is the most discouraged—and perhaps with good reason.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford, London correspondent of The New Republic, is widely known as a writer on history, economics and international affairs.

Carey McWilliams, author of "Factories in the Field," is the California State Commissioner of Immigration and Housing.

Felice Swados lives in New York City and specializes in writing on scientific and medical subjects.

William Stokes is a Canadian journalist who specializes in labor questions.

Babette Deutsch has written a number of books of poetry, the most recent of which is "One Part Love," to be published by the Oxford University Press.

Witter Bynner, poet and playwright, is the author of many books of verse.

Rexford G. Tugwell was formerly Under Secretary of Agriculture and is now chairman of the New York City Planning Commission.

Nathan Strauss is administrator of the United States Housing Authority.

Cuthbert Wright is professor of English Literature at Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts, and is a lecturer and contributor to various periodicals.

Alfred Vagts is the author of "A History of Militarism." He was a private and an officer in the German imperial army during the First World War.

Raymond E. F. Larsson has contributed poetry to The New Republic and other magazines. His books include "O City, Cities!" and "Wherefore Peace."

Nigel Dennis is an English novelist and critic who has been living in the United States for several years.

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